POVERTY IN NIGERIA: A RELIGIO, SOCIO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

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Doctor of Philosophy

by

Anthony Mbaegbu

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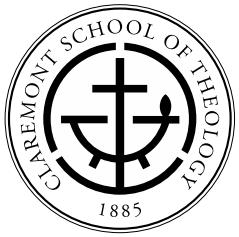

This Dissertation, written by

Anthony Mbaegbu

under the direction of his Faculty Committee and approved by its members,

has been presented to and accepted by

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Faculty Committee

Philip Clayton, Chairperson

Nicholas Grier

Bulus Galadima

Dean of the Faculty

Andrew Dreitcer

May 2024

Abstract

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Anthony Mbaegbu

Poverty is one of the defining challenges facing the world in the 21st century. It is a phenomenon that is as old as human history. Poverty is one the driving forces of inequality in life. Poverty is experienced everywhere in the world, both in developed and developing countries. Some countries have drastically reduced poverty and its impacts with the natural and human resources at their disposal that today poverty levels in such countries are negligible. It is perplexing and worrisome that Nigeria, a country with an abundance of natural resources, copious arable land, plentiful river water, a large land area for building, petroleum gas, large untapped solid materials, and a vast pool of human resources and other endowments, still lags behind economically. Demographically, Nigeria is perceived as the most populous country in Africa, ranked as the eighth exporter of oil in the world, but it still has the highest proportion of people living in extreme poverty.

Prior to independence in Nigeria 1960, the level of poverty was really low. However, sixty years after gaining independence, Nigeria rose from a low level of poverty to become one of the countries with greatest number of people in dire need of economic well-being. Successive governments both military and democratic have tried to reduce poverty it has been to no avail. Poverty is a major impediment to Nigeria's socio-economic development and has been prevalent despite various interventions. Several policies and programs have failed to yield improvement in Nigeria's Human Development index even in periods of economic growth. Instead of advancing economically, poverty is increasing exponentially leaving some Nigerians homeless, hungry,

insolvent, poor health, living in squalor, premature death, prone to disease and incapable of providing and caring for their families.

The focus of this research is to examine why Nigeria in spite of plethora of natural and human resources poverty still persists, and plagues Nigerians. It will study the key principles influencing poverty rate in Nigeria and their implications and consequences. It will review these concepts by employing a qualitative, descriptive, historical, interview, internet, and library research in order to broaden the understanding of the complexities the understanding of the complexities of the phenomenon of poverty from a global worldview and investigate how these relate to the nature of poverty in Nigeria. It collaborates the fact that poverty in Nigeria is complex and multidimensional in its conceptualization and measurement, encompassing economic, social, cultural and psychological indicators. The research attempts to explore the phenomenon of poverty within the Nigerian context by evaluating these theoretical paradigms.

The research manifested that especially corruption, bad leadership, insecurity, neo-colonialism, globalization, climate change, foreign aids and others as the core factors stimulating poverty in Nigeria. It mentioned unemployment, lack of infrastructure, poor remuneration and other societal ills as the indicators of poverty. The paper recommends that the government should utilize indigenous measures, put in place adequate processes and conducive environment, improvement of infrastructure to encourage more business operations in the country.

More so, the research encourages decolonization as an essential method to fight poverty. Decolonization will stimulate Africans, especially Nigerians, to be responsible and accountable for fighting their own freedom and learning to think outside of the European paradigm. It essence is that it will motivate Nigerians not to allow the colonizers to oppress and exploit them, and use their natural resources to develop their own countries. Furthermore, decolonization will help

Nigerian and other African countries to develop and transform economically, socially, politically and culturally without depending on the colonizers. The research suggests an understanding of underlying causal factors of poverty in designing pro-poor programs and a hydra-headed method to tackle its menace effectively and progressively. It argues that poverty reduction is realizable by empowering people to develop resilience to cope and overcome it within the scope of their resources and capabilities.

Table of Contents

Introduction **1**

Theoretical Framework 7

Assumptions 15

Contributions 16

Chapter One: Concept of Poverty **22**

1.1 Introduction 22

1.2 UN Definition of Poverty 23

1.3 World Bank Definition of Poverty 24

1.4 Central Bank of Nigeria Definition of Poverty (CBN) 25

1.5 Socio-Economic Definition of Poverty 26

1.6 Theological Definition of Poverty 27

1.7 Types of Poverty 28

1.8 Conclusion 32

Chapter Two: Analysis of Poverty in Nigeria—Colonial to Post-colonial Eras **34**

2.1 Introduction 34

2.2 Brief History of Nigeria 34

2.3 Colonial Era and Poverty in Nigeria 38

2.4 Postcolonial Period 48

2.4.1 The First Military Junta (1966) *50*

2.4.2 The Second Military Junta (1983-1998) *53*

2.5 Democratic Era 56

2.5.1 The First Republic (1963-1966) *58*

2.5.2 The Second Republic (1979-1983) *59*

2.5.3 The Third Republic (1992-1993) *60*

2.5.4 The Fourth Republic (1999-2023) *60*

2.5.5 Conclusion *68*

Chapter Three: Literature Review and Conceptual Analysis of the Causes of Poverty in Nigeria **69**

3.1 Introduction 69

3.2 Literature Review 69

3.2.1 Conceptual Analysis of Poverty *77*

3.2.2 Political Factors *78*

3.2.3 Foreign Aids *93*

3.2.4 Corruption *105*

3.2.5 Political Corruption *108*

3.2.6 Contract *110*

3.2.7 Causes of Corruption: *119*

3.2.8 Legislations and the Constitutional Framework *124*

3.2.9 Nigerian Membership of International Conventions on Fight against Corruption ... *125*

3.3 Economic Factors 142

3.3.1 Globalization *143*

3.3.2 Mono-Economy *147*

3.4 Cultural Factors 150

3.4.1 Inter-Tribal Conflicts *150*

3.4.2 Causes of Ethnic Conflict *153*

3.4.3 Marginalization of Women *164*

3.4.4 Laziness *170*

3.4.5 Lack of Patriotism *172*

3.4.6 Prebendalism *173*

3.4.7 Concentration on Politics Rather Than on Good Governance *175*

3.5 Religious Factors 177

3.6 Environmental Factors 186

3.6.1 Climate Change *186*

3.6.2 Agriculture and Food Insecurity *191*

3.6.3 Conclusion *199*

Chapter Four: Methodology and the Analysis of the Indicators of Poverty in Nigeria 200

4.1 Introduction 200

4.2 Methodology 200

4.3 Data Analysis 207

4.4 Research Objective 210

4.5 Indicators of Poverty 211

4.5.1 Socio-Economic Indicators *211*

4.5.2 Societal Indicators *235*

4.5.3 Conclusion *288*

Chapter Five: The Role of the Church in the Fight against Corruption 289

5.1 Introduction 289

5.2 Biblical Teaching on the Poor 289

5.3 The Catholic Church and the Poor 312

5.4 Church's Teaching on Corruption 336
5.5 The Church's Stand on Prosperity Gospels and Ministries 345
5.6 Accentuate Right and Moral Values 357
5.7 Church in Nigeria and Participation in Politics 361
5.8 Personal Theology 368
5.9 Conclusion 371
Chapter Six: Solutions to the Problems of Poverty and Corruption in Nigeria 372
6.1 Introduction 372
6.2 Socio-Economic Solutions 372
6.2.1 Improvement of Infrastructure 372
6.2.2 Reduce the Cost of Governance 378
6.2.3 Reward and Recognition of Hard Work 382
6.2.4 Implementation of Right Policies 386
6.3 Political Solutions 394
6.3.1 Transparency and Accountability 394
6.3.2 Checks and Balances 397
6.3.3 Godfatherism in Nigeria 401
6.3.4 Recycling of Political Office Holders 406
6.3.5 Conclusion 411
Chapter Seven: Evaluation and Conclusion 412
Postscript 415
Bibliography 418

Introduction

Poverty is a global menace, especially in developing countries like Nigeria and other countries in Africa. Poverty amid plenty is the world's greatest challenge. The country has spent billions in poverty alleviation schemes over different administrations, all of which did not stop Nigeria and Nigerians from being poor. It is most pathetic that the majority of Nigerians are living in a state of destitution, while the remaining relatively insignificant minority are living in affluence. These lopsided economic relations do not reflect the geographical spread of resource endowment; rather, it is a product of overt rapacity, injustice, and selfishness, which is above and beyond economic standards. Even though it is a reality that the environment where one comes from can influence strongly one's economic status because of diverse opportunities and restrictions, the situation in Nigeria differs diametrically from this.

Poverty in Nigeria has no geographical frontier. It is noticeable and experienced in the North, South, East, and West of the country. All the six geographical zones suffer from the threats and challenges of poverty. It is perceived both in the rural and urban areas of the country, but the prevalence and dimensions of poverty in the rural areas are more than in urban centers. The rural dwellers experience the most forms of deprivation. It permeates the lives of individuals and communities, leaving many trapped in a cycle of deprivation. The poverty line is a measure that separates the poor from the non-poor in the country. The poor have limited access to the basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, income, shelter, sanitation, health care, and education. They are illiterate; lack skills, gainful employment, and economic assets; and have low life expectancies. It is a burden and a herculean task for the poor to take care of themselves and their families. They are incapable of meeting their social and economic obligations. The poor lack purchasing power and experience exposure to risk, malnutrition, and high mortality rates.

Often, poverty humiliates and dehumanizes its victims. It has a very devastating influence on its victims. It reduces the social and psychological prestige of its victims. It produces a sense of powerlessness, a lack of dignity and respect.

The poverty situation in Nigeria and other African countries remains inexplicable, at least from two perceptions. First, poverty in Nigeria is enigmatic because the poverty level appears as a contradiction, considering the country's abundant and immense wealth. Nigeria is a country endowed with so many natural resources, enriched with both liquid and solid minerals, copious arable land, plentiful river water, and a large land area for building and producing many barrels of oil daily. Secondly, poverty has worsened despite the colossal human and material resources devoted to poverty alleviation by successive governments in Nigeria, without any considerable success accomplished from such efforts. The prevalence of poverty in Nigeria makes it seem to the common mind that poverty is normal and a part of life one has to live with until death. Poverty is a major impediment to Nigeria's socio-economic development and has been preserved despite various interventions. Nevertheless, since poverty remains a development issue, it has continued to capture the attention of both national governments and international agencies for several decades. The reduction of poverty has become a major policy concern for government and donor agencies in all poverty-stricken countries, Nigeria included. This research aims to delineate and decipher why poverty is endemic in Nigeria, and what can be done about it.

It will do this by exploring a brief history of Nigeria, and by using a qualitative research method, it will describe the nature, causes, pointers, and solutions to poverty in Nigeria. It portrays a picture that, in spite of the potential wealth of Nigeria's oil economy, Nigeria is still poor. The benefits of the country's wealth are not equitably shared throughout the country. I maintain that nature's gift is a blessing wherever it is deposited. In other countries, it is a

unifying ingredient, an indispensable factor for progress. But in Nigeria, it's a curse. It is a disintegrating parameter, a source of stagnation and backwardness.

The research mentions the economic, political, cultural, religious, and environmental causes of poverty. The political factors are colonialism, neo-colonialism, foreign aid, corruption, poor leadership, poor governance, political instability, and conflict. The economic reasons include globalization and a mono-economy. Cultural elements are inter-tribal conflicts, marginalization of women, laziness, and lack of patriotism. Religious causes are clashes between various religious groups and prosperity teachings. Environmental reasons comprise climate change, floods, drought, and the activities of herdsmen. These factors exacerbate poverty in Nigeria because they don't attract investors. They have negatively increased hunger, insecurity, instability, bad governance, poor leadership, and unemployment. The issue of unemployment among the youth is a crucial factor that is contributing to high crime rates and other nefarious activities in the country. Furthermore, these features instigate corruption, which devastates both the economy and the political system of a country. It deviates important financial resources. The pollution of corruption stimulates infrastructural decay, electoral malpractice, and flagrant abuse of office, displacement, embezzlement, transparency, bribery, prebendalism, irresponsibility, a weak judiciary, abandoned projects, and lack of employment opportunities. It has killed professionalism and destroyed patriotism.

The paper also focuses on and analyzes the indicators of poverty. The pointers of poverty are considered under two headings, namely, economic and societal pointers. Economic indicators are unemployment, lack of infrastructure, education, poor remuneration, and migration. The societal pointers are moral decadence, incessant crime, thuggery, violence, kidnapping, prejudice, nepotism, human trafficking, and ritual practices. Both economic and societal

indicators are inimical to the country. They retard and hinder the progress of Nigeria and stimulate poverty. For instance, because Nigeria and some other developing countries have insufficiently developed education systems, they cannot leave the vicious circle of poverty. Poor health and life expectancy are associated with inadequate education. Unemployment is tightly linked to poverty. People who lack education, or who only finished primary school often work poorly paid jobs, or struggle to find any job. In today's age of all-present digitalization, where knowledge quickly becomes outdated and traditional jobs are slowly disappearing, education becomes even more important, representing the critical factor that decides whether a person can adapt to changes and find a suitable job or become unemployed. In the same vein, nepotism is bad for the economy. It promotes corruption, tribalism and ethnicity, mismanagement, and the performance of organizations. It encourages mediocrity, hinders competition and innovation. It gives rise to prejudice, thuggery, violence and inept leadership. With these factors present in Nigeria, economic progress becomes a mirage, and poverty is instigated.

Having stated the factors and pointers of poverty, this thesis presents the role of the Church in the fight against poverty and corruption. This is because the church is the hope of the powerless, and the voice of the voiceless. It does this by exploring who are the poor in the bible, what prosperity teaching is, accentuating moral values, and participating in politics. The church explains that the poor are dear to God, their sufferings and lack in this present life will not be the same in the life to come. Their reward will be great in the kingdom of God. The church gives a standard clarification on prosperity teaching and makes it clear that the principle that faith expressed through positive thoughts, positive declarations, and donations to the church draws health, wealth and happiness needs to be re-evaluated. The church indicates that instead of this type of preaching, the prosperity pastors should cease ostentatious living and use the finance to

establish industries and employ people. Those who have schools should make them affordable to the poor and let people realize that financial prosperity is no sure mark of God's favor, and suffering is no sure mark of His displeasure. Furthermore, the church encourages the clergy and the faithful to participate in politics. Members of the clergy are to use their prophetic role and speak out against corruption, bad governance, instability, insecurity, embezzlement, killings, greed and other atrocities. The faithful by joining and vying for political positions, coming out to vote on election days, living by example as to correct the anomalies of the political class.

The author, supporting the church, notes that the type of leadership the country needs to assist in alleviating poverty is servant or ethical leadership. This is because servant or ethical leaders are grounded like Jesus Christ. They would make good decisions based on a defined set of values. They will be accountable, transparent, responsible, honest, respectful, empathetic, compassionate, committed and faithful. Like Jesus Christ, they will be compassionate to the poor, vulnerable, marginalized, and downtrodden (Mark 2: 13-17, Luke 5: 31-32, Luke 19:1-10, Matthew 9:36-38). Ethical leadership will boldly challenge the status quo following the foot-steps of Jesus (James 4:17, Mark 5:25-34, Mark 11:27-33). In addition to being compassionate, servant leadership will be faithful (Joshua 5:15; 14:6-15, Numbers 13:31, 2 Corinthians 2:2). Above all, servant leadership will be courageous to speak out against evil in the society (1 Kings 18:27; Psalm 56: 3-4). On the same token, ethical leadership will bridge the gap between selfishness, greed, and corruption (Acts 4:35-36, Luke 12:13-21, 1 Timothy 6:6-10). Ethical or servant leadership imitating Jesus Christ's principles of love, transparency, consideration, and forthrightness will reduce poverty in Nigeria and other countries. They will take into consideration that human beings are created in the image and likeness of God and are given the injunction to dominate the earth (Genesis 1:27-28). Servant leadership will promote human

dignity, equity, and harmony and will make it possible for everybody to share in the common good.

The research is most interested in demonstrating some solutions to the challenges of poverty. It explained why the various schemes established by the successive governments' military and civilian to solve the overwhelming issue of poverty did not work. The solutions are based on socio-economic, political, and religious. Among the socio-economic solutions are; improvement of infrastructure, agriculture, education, health, reducing the cost of governance, reward and recognition of hard work and implementation of right policies. Included in the political solutions are; transparency, accountability, checks and balances, godfatherism, recycling of political office holders. It noted that infrastructure improvement will create employment, better remuneration, and encourage investors. Agriculture, will diversify the economy of the country, and will help to fight food insecurity. Implementation of right policies incredibly will reduce dishonesty, insecurity and misappropriation. It will prompt checking effectively the effects of environmental challenges like climate change, drought, flood and the infamous actions of herdsmen.

Transparency as reported, will ensure responsibility, reduce corruption, embezzlement and fraud. The eradication of godfatherism will motivate free and fair election, minimize ethical friction, instability, poor leadership and bad governance which in turn will usher in servant or ethical leadership as mentioned above. Checks and balances will give the judiciary and legislative arms of government the desired independence which will stimulate justice, fairness and equity. Effectively, to stop recycling political office holders will inspire more people to participate in politics especially youth and women. It will diminish nepotism, kidnapping, crime, thuggery, human trafficking and cultism.

As part of the solution, this chapter highlights conscious or willful resistance. Conscious or willful resistance requires deliberately repelling all structures that encourage and honor oppression, poverty, ethnic and religious crises, godfatherism, prebendalism, bad governance, embezzlement, and neocolonialism. Implementing this standard will allow for the psychological, spiritual, economic, political, social, and cultural liberation of Nigerians and other African countries. The golden rule is vital to advance willful or conscious resistance. "Do unto others as you would like them do unto you." Willful or conscious resistance endows individuals through education, philosophy, and healthy community education on the essence of doing good and avoiding evil. The golden rule will be emphasized in families, schools, churches, mosques, among business entrepreneurs, politicians, public servants, and judiciary members. Conscious or willful resistance is essential because its primary purpose is compassion. Both the golden rule and compassion are universal, and are based on justice and fairness. If these solutions are implemented with utmost dedication, the disease of poverty will be reduced in Nigeria, and other developing countries.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this dissertation draws on the work of several scholars, such as Frantz Fanon (1961), Emmanuel Y. Lartey (2013), Albert Memmi (1991), and others who have developed concepts and theories on the relationship between colonizers and the colonized, with a particular focus on oppression, struggle, poverty, liberation, and social justice. Specifically, Fanon's theory of decolonization and similar articulations, such as postcolonization, transformation, and freedom, are employed to ground descriptions and analysis of Fanon's thought and practice of struggle and liberation for Nigeria and other African countries.

Emmanuel Y. Lartey's concept of postcolonization and Albert Memmi's notion of the colonizer and the colonized are pivotal in helping to understand and analyze Fanon's views of colonization and decolonization. Fanon has two books on this topic: The Wretched of the Earth (1961), Black Skin, White Masks (1952). Amidst the poverty in Africa, especially in Nigeria, Fanon observed that the continent is still under colonial rule and being oppressed by the colonizers. He painfully noted that the colonial world is compartmentalized:

> The colonized world is divided into two. The dividing line, the border, is represented by the barracks and the police stations. In the colonies, the official, legitimate agent, the spokesperson for the colonizer and the regime of oppression, is the police officer or the soldier…The colonists sector is a sector built to last, all stone and steel. It is a sector of lights and paved roads, where trash cans constantly overflow with strange and wonderful garbage, undreamed-of leftovers…They are protected by solid shoes in a sector where the streets are clean and smooth, without a pothole, without a stone. The colonist's sector is sated, sluggish sector, its belly is permanently full of good things. The colonist's sector is white folks' sector, a sector of foreigners. The colonized's sector, or at least the "native" quarters, the shanty town, the Medina, the reservation, is a disreputable place inhabited by disreputable people…The colonized sector is a famished sector. Hungry for bread, meat, shoes, coal and light. The colonized's sector is a sector that crouches and cowers, a sector on its knees, a sector that is prostrate. It's a sector of niggers, a sector of towelheads.[1]

As indicated, the colonial world is impeccably built and maintained with modern convinces and opportunity, whereas the world of the colonized is disgraceful. It is saddled with poverty, famine, disease, and illiteracy. The colonial world is a "Manichean world"[2] that is divided into light and dark, in which the white colonizers are seen as light, and the black colonized individuals are perceived as darkness and the epitome of evil.

Unsurprisingly, Fanon sees the need for developing a continent in which colonialism or even neo-colonialism is not forced upon by the colonizers' ideology and belief systems but a

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[1] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1961), 3-5.
[2] Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 15.

development borne out of the continent's experience that speaks of liberation, improvement, and human development. Fanon expresses,

> National liberation, national reawakening, restoration of the nation to the people or commonwealth, whatever the name used, whatever the latest expression, decolonization is always a violent event. At any level we study it-individual encounters, a change of name for a sport club, the guest list at a cocktail party, members of a police force or the board of directors of a state or private bank-decolonization is quite simply the substitution of one species of mankind by another. The substitution is unconditional, absolute, total and seamless.[3]

In the colonial society, the colonized seemed to inherently know that their liberation can only be accomplished through violent means. In effect, the colonized is no longer ready to allow the colonizers to exploit and use their natural resources to develop their home countries. The colonized want to use their resources themselves and build their countries.

Decolonization involves the redefinition of Africans' human identity in a colonized world and fight against systemic socially, economically, religiously, and politically subjugation. Decolonization is about transformation, challenging and altering the world order. Fanon indicates,

> Decolonization never goes unnoticed, for it focuses on and fundamentally alters being, and transforms the spectator crushed to a nonessential state into a privileged actor, captured in a virtually grandiose fashion by the spotlight of History. It infuses a new rhythm, specific to a new generation of men, with a new language and a new humanity. Decolonization is truly the creation of new men. But such a creation cannot be attributed to a supernatural power: The "thing" colonized becomes a man through the very process of liberation.[4]

To achieve decolonization, there is a genuine cause to challenge the colonial situation. This challenge is not to be taken for granted, or be accomplished through a shake of hand. Fanon declares,

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[3] Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 1.
[4] Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 2.

> Decolonization which sets out to change the order of the world, is clearly an agenda for total disorder. But it cannot be accomplished by the wave of a magic wand, a natural cataclysm, or a gentleman's agreement. Decolonization, we know, is an historical process: In other words, it can only be understood, it can only find significance and become self-coherent insofar as we can discern the history-making movement which gives it form and substance.[5]

If the colonized expectation is that they must achieve liberation through nonviolence that reflects the double standard that plagues colonialism. Therefore, the colonized must be prepared to attain and gain the benefits of decolonization. Decolonization involves force because the colonizers are uncomfortable relinquishing power, whereas the colonized are eager to reclaim power, their lands and natural resources.

Furthermore, decolonization will help the colonized to mitigate new forms of oppression, exploitation, and poverty. It will encourage the colonized to develop national consciousness and inherent self-worth. The colonized will appreciate independence both on paper and in actuality. The colonized will no longer tolerate to be defined as an animal, undeserved and expendable. Fanon states, "Sometimes this Manichaeanism reaches its logical conclusion and dehumanizes the colonized subject. In plain talk, he is reduced to the state of an animal. And consequently, when the colonists speaks of the colonized he uses zoological terms."[6] It will motivate the colonized to smash economic, political, social, and religious development obstacles. Decolonization, will stimulate the colonized to recover their history, culture, language, and dignity and take charge of their natural resources. An end to colonialism and neo-colonialism will enable the colonized to tell and write their history and not be dependent on the discriminatory and harmful history written and said by the colonizers; this will enhance the

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[5] Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 2.
[6] Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 7.

humanity and the mental health of the colonized. Fanon's theory helps the colonized to focus on decolonization, which uplifts the colonized, as opposed to the oppressive view of colonialism, neo-colonialism, capitalism, and globalization. The colonizers and the colonized were born into and nurtured by two different experiences; therefore, the colonized needed a view of decolonization that would promote and promulgate their freedom.

In the same vein, decolonization inspires and empowers the colonized to remove the unjust social, economic, and political structures that cause pain, poverty, and oppression. Fanon argues that to dismantle colonialism and challenge the colonial situation, colonial thinking must be eliminated by decolonization. He elaborates,

> Challenging the colonial world is not a rational confrontation of viewpoints. It is not a discourse on the universal but the impassioned claim by the colonized that their world is fundamentally different. The colonial world is a Manichaean world. The colonist is not content with physically limiting the space of the colonized, i.e., with the help of his agents of law and order…the colonist turns the colonized into a kind of quintessence of evil. Colonized society is not merely portrayed as a society without values. The colonist is not content with stating that the colonized world has lost its values or worse never possessed any. The "native" is declared impervious to ethics, representing not only the absence of values but also the negation of values. He is, dare we say it, the enemy of values. In other words absolute evil.[7]

Colonial thinking, encourages the colonizers to subjugate the colonized. It motivates the colonizers to systematically exploit and annex the lands and resources of the colonized without their consent. In effect, the countries of the colonized cannot be realized in the image and legacy of the colonizers. Eliminating the thought patterns and ideas of the colonizers will embolden the colonized to know they are moral beings with dignity and alienable rights. It will assist the colonized to regain political, cultural, religious, economic, and social liberation. Notably, the

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[7] Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 6.

colonized will understand they are not as lazy as the colonizers stated. The colonizers indicated that to dominate, impoverish, and control the colonized continually.

Another framework to help guide my research is Postcolonializing God: An African Practical Theology by Emmanuel Y. Lartey (2013). He used some biblical narratives to expose colonialism and its negative impacts (Genesis 11:1-9 Matthew 8: 5-8, Matthew 15: 21-8, Luke 17: 11-19, Luke 10:29-37)); he opined that colonialism should be eliminated because its essence are imposition, domination, exploitation, and superiority. Embellishing with the story of the tower of Babel, he indicates,

> This group of humans desired total control, hegemony, prime place currently and for posterity. They would debase and obliterate any differences among them-in point of fact they would not allow or recognize any differences. They had one language. They would insist on their way alone as being the way for all to follow. This is the essence of colonialization. The language, customs and ways of life of one group are imposed on all. Everyone who comes under the influence of the colonizer must succumb to the colonizer's way or else be crushed. Everyone must 'speak the same language' –a supremely monculturalist insistence-or be brought into line, forcibly if necessary, eliminated, expelled or else considered uncultured, uncouth, deviant even deranged.[8]

As a strong advocate of postcolonialism, he mentioned the benefits to be gained from the Tower of Babel. In postcolonial terms, at least three lessons can be derived from this narrative. First, the existing diversity of human languages and cultures is the result of divine redemptive action. God acts to ensure that there is diversity in humanity's culture. Second, that diversity is preferred by God to hegemony. Unity or uniformity directs towards the hubris of intrusive power and self – (or people-) aggrandizing control contradicts the Creator's will and purpose in humanity. Stated simply-God prefers diversity. Third, that God acts within the global community to affirm human diversity. God is not inactive in the face of hegemonic control by any human

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[8] Emmanuel Y. Lartey, *Postcolonializing God: An Africa Practical Theology* (Norwich: SCM Press, 2013), 3.

community. God acts to dispel and diffuse hegemony. God not only decolonizes (scatters the people) but also postcolonizes (confuses the language) of human community. It is as such, perhaps in the confusing (babel) of the language of the people, that we see most clearly the postcolonializing intent of God. Language, one of the most salient characteristics of culture and politics, is what is diversified, symbolic of God's counter-hegemonic and pluralizing activity." The objective of Postcolonialism is to disempower the intellectual, linguistic, social, and economic principles of colonialism by which colonialists perceive and understand the world. Postcolonial theory engages the colonized to speak for themselves in their own voices. It enables the colonized to develop their thought patterns, language, society, economy, and politics. More so, postcolonialism empowers the colonized to examine deeply the social, political, and economic power that sustains colonialism and neocolonialism and the relationship between the colonizers and the colonized. Postcolonial theory will stimulate the colonized to realize that colonialism is not the extension of civilization. It is the colonizers' arrogation to promote superiority, and that the colonized is inferior.

Lartey decried that the colonized have often used the resources and tools of the colonizers to think and do theology. This, he notes, promotes colonization and limits the colonized in the way to think about God. He buttresses this with the Akan terminology 'Nyankopon', which is the name of God. He observed that

> Christian theology has been done predominantly utilizing tools and resources developed in European contexts. By application of the Akan wise saying this inadequate sharing of tasks of the theology has resulted in a European hunchback. Moreover, by that same token, a distortion of the understanding of God has resulted. This erasure of an aspect of the image of God in humanity has led a warped picture of the nature of God. Having been forced to exclude the African, and other peoples, from the construction of the image of God, Christians have been made to see God exclusively in European terms. This means

we have been restricted to only one aspect of the divine mystery.[9]

This means that when all people carry God, no person becomes hunchbacked. This is fulfilling and gratifying. The theological insight is incredible because when only one person or group of persons carry God the burden is intolerable and burdensome. In effect, the arduous task of bearing God is best done by many groups of people working together. The task of carrying God by many groups of people will assist each group, in their own way, with the tools accessible to them to manifest the omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, and the greatest of the God of creation. This system of theology will minimize both colonialism and neocolonialism. It will usher in the indigenous manner of worshiping and thinking about God. It portends that the colonized is capable, competent, and possesses the same capabilities as the colonizers and not subhuman as the colonizers assumed.

The Colonizer and the Colonized (1991) by Albert Memmi further enhances my research. According to Memmi, the colonizer renders the colonized inadequate in his country. The colonized is looked upon as a criminal, and because of that, the colonized is removed from history, dehumanized, and treated unjustly. Memmi elucidates, "The most serious blow suffered by the colonized is being removed from history and from the community. Colonization usurps any free role in either war or peace, every decision contributing to his destiny and that of the world, and all cultural and social responsibility."[10]

This unfavorable situation disenfranchises the colonized and renders the colonized voiceless and useless, and the colonized cannot contribute anything to the affairs of the country. The colonized is not heard and not responsible for anything in the country. The colonized bear

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[9] Lartey, *Postcolonializing God*, 124.
[10] Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1991), 91.

the pain of this alienation and lament the situation. Memmi states, "The colonized, on the other hand, feels neither responsible nor guilty nor skeptical, for he is out of the game. He is in no way a subject of history anymore. Of course, he carries the burden, often more cruelly than others, but always as an object. He has forgotten how to participate actively in history and no longer even asks to do so."[11]

This marginalization is supported by the government and a judicial system fed and renewed by the colonizer's historical, economic, and cultural needs. Because of this, the thought of freedom looks pretty remote to the colonized. Distinction, privileged position, supremacy, segregation, oppression, and alienation, as principles of colonization, are to be rejected by the colonized. The colonized should discard them because they motivate the colonizers to exploit and defraud the colonized economically, politically, socially, and culturally. Essentially, these factors aggravate the colonized to be perpetually dependent on the colonizers. This system of oppression stimulates poverty in the land of the colonized and causes the colonized to forget their language and culture.

Assumptions

This research assumes that Fanon, Lartey, and Memmi admired the core truth about colonialism and neocolonialism but not their oppressive applications by the colonizers to the colonized. It equally assumes that the objectives of these authors were to proclaim and personify a holistic message of political, economic, social, cultural, and religious liberation by incorporating and reiterating the colonized consciousness, ingenuity, and potential. Furthermore, the research accepts that due to the socioeconomic and political situation of the colonized under

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[11] Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, 91.

colonialism and neocolonialism, there was an environment conducive to the emergence of decolonialism and postcolonialism in contrast to the prevalent oppression of colonialism and neocolonialism.

Consequently, certain types of value systems between colonialism and decolonialism resulted in perceiving and advocating for the colonized. Given the reality that colonialism has been transformed into neocolonialism, there is still a genuine need for resistance to help liberate the colonized.

Contributions

The works of Fanon, Lartey, and Memmi significantly and abundantly rejected Colonialism and neocolonialism. In their places, they advocated for decolonialism and postcolonialism. This research, having examined their works, builds on them and contributes to the existing pieces of literature. This research project states that for Nigeria and other African countries to improve economically, politically, socially, religiously, and culturally and to minimize poverty, they must develop what this researcher calls 'Conscious or willful resistance.' Conscious or willful resistance entails intentionally resisting all systemic structures that promote poverty, oppression, domination, and alienation in Africa, especially in Nigeria. This means repelling such things as colonialism, neo-colonialism, corruption, bad governance, poor leadership, godfatherism, ethnic and religious conflicts, prebendalism, fraud, and embezzlement. Conscious or wilful resistance empowers individuals through education, philosophy, and healthy community organization.

Conscious or willful resistance is based on the golden rule. "Do unto others as you would like them do unto you." (Matthew 7:12, Luke 6:31). It is sometimes called an ethics of reciprocity or golden law. The golden rule appears as a positive or negative injunction governing

conduct. For instance, treat others as you would like others to treat you (positive or direct form). Do not treat others in ways you would not like to be treated (negative or prohibitive). What you wish upon others, you wish upon yourself (empathetic or responsive form).

Conscious or willful resistance is based on the golden rule because it is a universal principle. This simple moral principle is prevalent in world religions. It is found in their tenets and creeds. It is also found in various cultures throughout history. "According to Marc H. Bornstein, and William E. Paden, the Golden Rule is arguably the most essential basis for the modern concept of human rights, in which each individual has a right to just treatment, and a reciprocal responsibility to ensure justice for others."[12] One of the most incredible things about the golden rule is its simplicity and brevity. It can capture an entire moral infrastructure in a short phrase. There is nothing complicated about this. It is only logical that when we treat each other the way we would want to be treated, we all flourish. Think about how wonderful the world would be if we could all finally implement this simple rule daily. In Nigeria, the essence of conscious or willful resistance centered on the golden rule will be constantly reiterated in families, schools for teachers and students, churches, mosques, business entrepreneurs, politicians, public servants, and judiciary members.

The core of conscious or willful resistance is compassion. Compassion motivates people to go out of their way to relieve the physical, mental, or emotional pains of others and themselves. It is sensitivity to the emotional aspects of others' suffering. Compassion is based on fairness, justice, and interdependence. It stimulates people to do 'good and avoid evil.' Like the golden rule, compassion is a basic human principle. It is predominant in all religions and human

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[12] Wikipedia, s.v. "Golden Rule," last modified March 12, 2024, 20:50, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_Rule.

history. Compassion summarizes the love of neighbor. It stimulated the Good Samaritan to care for the man who fell victim to robbers. The language of compassion is universal and understandable. Compassion will encourage Africans, especially Nigerians, to implement the essence and value of 'Ubuntu', which is 'I am because we are.' It emphasizes the interconnectedness of individuals with their surrounding societal and physical worlds. It accentuates the communal ethos and the shared responsibility among the community.

Conscious or willful resistance will assist Nigerians in curbing the factors that hinder economic progress and aggravate poverty, especially corruption. According to Ameh Ejekwonyilo, "A Nigerian academic based in the United States, Toyin Falola, says the political elite in Nigeria must reform the country's governance to deliver socio-economic prosperity to its citizens."[13] Ejekwonyilo goes on to quote Falola as saying,

> If they politicians and political parties are not ready to reform, they will not be able to control the consequences. . . . Corruption in Nigeria is a complex issue deeply rooted in social norms and cultural factors. These influential forces play a significant role in shaping the prevalence of corruption within the country. The practice of "clientelism" and "godfatherism" play a significant role in fostering corruption within societies.[14]

Furthermore, "Mr Falola said merely increasing workers' wages would not combat endemic corruption in public service."[15] "We have to reduce monetary attraction of public office holders. In the fight against corruption, it is crucial to focus on transforming behaviours and fostering a culture of integrity and accountability. This requires active participation from individuals across

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[13] Ameh Ejekwonyilo, "Corruption: Nigerian Leaders Must Reform or Face Dire Consequences—Toyin Falola," *Premium Times*, August 15, 2003, https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/616248-corruption-nigerian-leaders-must-reform-or-face-dire-consequences-toyin-falola.html.

[14] Toyin Falola, "Corruption, Social Norms and Behaviour Change in Nigeria" (speech at national policy dialogue on corruption organized by Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission, Abuja, August 8, 2023), quoted in Ejekwonyilo, "Corruption."

[15] Ejekwonyilo, "Corruption."

different sectors."[16] Therefore, the government should build strong institutions and provide social safety nets for its citizens. "To effectively combat corruption, it is crucial to have ethical leaders who prioritize integrity and international cooperation."[17]

Willful or conscious resistance, grounded on compassion and the Golden Rule, will be echoed in every sector of society, beginning with family. It helps to distinguish between good and evil. It inspires people to let the light in them shine. It instigates people to know that we are all interrelated and, therefore, have a share in the common good. Moral leaders with compassion will restrain corruption and other systemic ills that hinder Nigeria from economic development.

Conscious or willful resistance will stimulate responsibility and empower Nigerians to demand accountability, transparency, and good governance from politicians. Bishop Kukah states,

> The political class will continue to behave the way they do, largely because we let them do so. . . . Merely conducting elections, even the freest and fairest elections, will never mean that we cannot continue to engage the political class. Why we continue to suffocate in Nigeria is because we assume that after we've elected people, we will trust them to do things for us. We don't elect people to enjoy and be comfortable on our behalf. Our duty and responsibility is to constantly make those who govern us feel uncomfortable if they are not performing well. The critical thing is what happens after elections; that is where engagement needs to take place. However, Nigerians tend to outsource their responsibilities, and we continue to pray that men and women of good will will take over our country, govern us, and we will live happily ever after. It doesn't work like that; we must constantly be knocking on their door and remind them that the fact they have been elected puts an obligation on them.[18]

When people are empowered, they will demand their rights from politicians. They will have a voice in how they are governed. This will bring about positive change in personal

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[16] Falola, "Corruption, Social Norms and Behaviour Change."
[17] Ejekwonyilo, "Corruption."
[18] Matthew Hassan Kukah, Channels TV, November 1, 2023, quoted in "Nigerians Responsible for Behaviour of Political Class—Bishop Kukah," *Vanguard*, November 8, 2023, https://www.vanguardngr.com/2023/11/nigerians-responsible-for-behaviour-of-political-class-bishop-kukah/.

behavior, social situations, and organizations that influence their lives. Society will be peaceful and progressive.

Conscious or willful resistance will minimize prosperity preachers' erroneous teaching and claims. When willful and conscious resistance is presented founded on the golden rule and compassion, the gospel value of Jesus Christ will replace the wealth and health messages of prosperity teaching. Emmanuel Katongole observes,

> The response to Africa's woes lies in a call for deeper evangelization and discipleship –in drawing people to Christ and grounding them more deeply in a new spiritual identity. The new spiritual identity not only affects the way the new Christian understands issues like power, leadership, and service; it also provides inspiration and the motivation to work toward a more peaceful social order- an order that more closely reflects God's kingdom on earth.[19]

The expectation is that when prosperity teachers preach the authentic message and live the gospel tenets of Jesus Christ, factors that render people poor, gullible, and lazy will be reduced. Prosperity preachers will learn to establish industries that will employ people. They will stop extorting people and eliminate living ostentatiously. They will use their influence to enact favorable social policies and programs to create an equitable, just, and democratic society.

Conscious or willful resistance teaches and reminds Africans, especially Nigerians, of the essence and benefits of doing good and avoiding evil. It maintains that conscious and willful resistance centered on compassion and the golden rule will propel positive change in Nigeria. Being created in the image and likeness of God, conscious or willful resistance will stimulate God's people to cultivate a passionate commitment to justice. It will encourage economic,

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[19] Emmanuel Katongole, *The Sacrifice of Africa: A Political Theology for Africa* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), 34.

social, cultural, religious, and political progress. Willful or conscious resistance will motivate accountability, transparency, good governance, integrity, and selfless service.

Chapter One: Concept of Poverty

1.1 Introduction

This chapter will focus on the various notions and types of poverty. It will describe the etymology, UN, World Bank, Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), Socio-economic and Theological explanations of poverty. This will help to ascertain what poverty means for Nigerians and the kind of poverty Nigerians experience. It will show that poverty is more than dearth of money.

Poverty is a reality that is experienced worldwide. Poverty defies objective description because of its multi-dimensional nature. There is no universally accepted definition of poverty. This makes it difficulty in deciding where to draw the line between the poor and the non- poor. Each community or nation has its own threshold that determines what poverty is, and how many of its people are living in poverty. Various methods have been used to conceptualize poverty. Poverty impacts physical, moral and psychological human conditions. Poverty is not limited to the lack of money to acquire the essential and basic necessities of life. Poverty entails being financially, mentally, socially, economically, and politically handicapped. It is characterized by lack of purchasing power, exposure to risk, malnutrition, high mortality rate, low life expectancy, insufficient access to social and economic services and few opportunities for incoming generation.

Etymologically, *poverty* comes from the French word *poverte* "'destitution, want, need or insufficiency of money or goods,' from old French *poverte*, *povrete* 'poverty, misery, wretched condition' (Modern French *pauvreté*), from Latin *paupertatem* (nominative *paupertas*) 'poverty,' from *pauper* 'poor.'"[1] The indication is that poverty depicts a lack of food, clothes, education,

[1] Online Etymology Dictionary, s.v. "poverty (n.)," accessed January 9, 2024, etymonline.com/word/poverty.

and other basic amenities. Several poor people lack the basic necessities of life to a degree that it can be wondered how they manage to survive.

1.2 UN Definition of Poverty

Poverty is a concept that is not easy to describe. This is because varied factors are responsible for poverty. The complexity of this term *poverty* makes it difficult to have a consensus definition. Because of this, the United Nations describes poverty as

> A denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity. It means lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in the society. It indicates not having enough to feed and clothe family, not having a school or clinic to go to, not having land on which to grow one's food or a job to one's living, not having access to credit. It means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households and communities. It means susceptibility to violence and as often implies living in marginal or fragile environments without access to clean water and sanitation.[2]

This implies that the income level from employment is so low that basic human needs can't be met. It further entails that poverty-stricken people and families might go without proper housing, clean water, healthy food, and medical attention. They are challenged by insecurity, vulnerable to diseases, natural disasters and premature death especially children and women. Their capability level is extremely low. Poverty has stripped them of the basic necessities of life. This definition manifests the jeopardy poor people contend with in life. It means that poverty does not only occur because people lack money or material possessions. Poverty also happens because

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[2] Olatomide Waheed Olowa, "Concept, Measurement and Causes of Poverty: Nigeria in Perspective," *American Journal of Economics* 2, no. 1 (2012): 26, https://doi.org/10.5923/j.economics.20120201.04.

some people cannot protect or defend themselves, they become susceptible to every available situation.

1.3 World Bank Definition of Poverty

The World Bank, as an international organization that sees to the distribution of economic aid, providing advice, research and how to alleviate poverty by offering developmental assistance to countries, draws a distinction between extreme and moderate poverty. World Bank remarks that poverty "is the inability to meet 'basic needs,' physical, food, health care, education, shelter etc and non-physical, participation, identity, and … requirement for meaningful life."[3] Going by this definition, it is evident that poverty motivates lower life expectancy, social exclusion, limited proficiencies, and lack of access to information.

World Bank also describes poverty as "lack of voice, power, and independence that subjects them to exploitation. Their poverty leaves them vulnerable to rudeness, humiliation, and inhuman treatment by both private and public agents of the state from whom they seek help."[4] This means the poor are susceptible and have low standard of living. They are defenseless, and cannot speak for themselves. This makes their situation pitiable and painful. The humiliation of the poor is contemptible and sorrowful. Poverty leaves people to be voiceless, suffer indignity and low esteem.

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[3] World Development Sources, *Taking Action for Poverty Reduction in Sub-Saharan Africa: Report of an African Region Task Force (English)* (Washington, DC: World Bank Group, 1996), http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/461331468768268574/Taking-action-for-poverty-reduction-in-sub-Saharan-Africa-report-of-an-Africa-region-task-force.

[4] World Development Sources, *Taking Action for Poverty Reduction*.

1.4 Central Bank of Nigeria Definition of Poverty (CBN)

The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) is the apex bank of Nigeria that nurtures the money and capital markets of the country. Maintains current account for commercial banks. Plays the role of financial adviser to the federal government and provides foreign exchange for payment of debts or purchase of foreign goods. According to Ezekiel Oybola Oyemomi, the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) describes poverty as

> a state where an individual is not able to cater adequately for his or her basic needs of food, clothing and shelter; is unable to meet social and economic obligations, lacks gainful employment, skills, assets and self- esteem; and has limited access to social and economic infrastructure such as education, health, portable water, and sanitation, and consequently, has limited chance of advancing his or her welfare to the limit of his or her capabilities.[5]

This reflects the exact situation of Nigeria and Nigerians regarding poverty. Poverty has rendered some Nigerians to be uneducated, lack shelter, clean environment and good job. Moreover, poverty has made it easy and simple for some Nigerians to be prone to diseases, lack the ability to seek medication attention. It has increased low life expectancy, and premature death. This definition manifests a picture that in spite of the abundant natural resources of Nigeria, the country is still poor. The benefits of the country's wealth are not shared equally throughout the country. In Nigeria, poverty is noticeable both in the rural and urban areas. Even

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[5] Ezekiel Oyebola Oyemomi, "An Assessment of Poverty Reduction Strategies in Nigeria 1983-2002," (PhD diss., St. Clement University, 2003), 16.

though, its incidence is higher in the rural areas than the urban centers. The urban slum dwellers form one of the more deprived group.

1.5 Socio-Economic Definition of Poverty

Social sciences as branch of studies that deals with human society or elements of society like state, family, race, institutions and communities articulate the idea of poverty in four ways: lack of access to basic goods, impaired access to productive resources, outcome of inefficient use of common resources and result of exclusive mechanisms. "Poverty as lack of access to basic needs and goods is essentially economic or consumption oriented. It explains poverty in material terms and specifically employs consumption-based categories to explain the extent and depth of poverty, and establish who is, and who is not poor.

> Thus the poor are conceived as those individuals or households in particular society, incapable of purchasing a specified basket of basic goods and services. Basic goods are nutrition, shelter/housing, water, health care; access to productive resources includes education, working skills, tools, political and civil rights to participate in decisions concerning socio-economic conditions.[6]

The social sciences perceive poverty as bringing more harm than good to those who are its unlucky captive. It is a harbinger of negativity as it only leaves destructive trails. It diminishes and subdues its victims. It does not promote human dignity and rights. The implication is that people in poverty typically experience persistent hunger or starvation, inadequate or absent education and health care, and are usually alienated from mainstream society. Social sciences

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[6] World Development Sources, *Taking Action for Poverty Reduction*.

perceive poverty as a consequence of the uneven distribution of material resources and wealth on global scale and within nations.

1.6 Theological Definition of Poverty

Many people and organizations view poverty in economic terms. This means the poor appear to be those who do not have enough income and are incapable and unable to provide for basic needs. The theologically definition of poverty is not only economic but encompasses the condition, causes and circumstances which may be complex. The theological description of poverty is biblically based. That is why in the bible, poverty is associated with oppression, isolation and injustice (Proverbs 13:23; 19:4). Poverty can exist in a person whose moral/spiritual condition is degraded (Proverbs 23:21). Poverty can also be as result of foolishness (Proverbs 28:19). Poverty means powerlessness. It is the experience of economic and social deprivation. The poor don't have basic necessities. They are marginalized, live in the slumps, and shanty towns. They are the people who live in ghettos and informal settlements. In the developing countries they are the people that are used, abused and exploited by multinational corporations. Poverty entails being a victim of injustice of the rich and powerful (Isaiah 3:14-15). This implies that poverty is most often not simply an economic issue but arises when one group can exploit or oppress another. It means that people can be poor in spirit, mind, body and soul. Therefore, poverty is not just the lack of the physical, emotional, spiritual, material and social needs of humanity. It entails lack of economic resources to obtain the basic necessities of life. Isaiah 61:1. This is the core passage that embellishes my theological perspective of poverty.

It is a theology that focuses on the needs of the people. God has called us to be a people who carry the good news, and this is not just preaching the word and shoving Bibles down people's throats. Rather, we are to bind up the brokenhearted, providing and caring for those in despair and hopelessness. More so, we are to proclaim freedom for the captives. This freedom directly refers to the year of the Jubilee, marked as a time of replenishment and restoration that God instituted, ensuring that the rich would not get richer and the poor get poorer. God cares for both the poor and the rich and created governance to bring about justice and fairness. The aforementioned explanations of poverty speak eloquently to the situation in Nigeria. Some people are poor in Nigeria because of indolence, and sheer foolhardiness, this will be explained in details later. The next subsection will explore the various types of poverty.

1.7 Types of Poverty

Poverty is multi-dimensional. People suffer poverty differently. The type of poverty in one place may not be the type of poverty in another place. The type of poverty in the developed countries differs from the type of poverty in developing countries. For instance, the type of poverty in Nigeria is distinct from the type of poverty in the United States. This means that individuals suffer poverty according to their circumstances. It is because of these varied circumstances that this subsection will explore the different types of poverty.

Absolute Poverty: This is the extreme kind of poverty involving chronic lack of food, clean water, health, education, information and housing. People in absolute poverty tend to struggle to live and experience infant mortality from preventable diseases like malaria, cholera,

and water contamination related diseases. Attesting to this, Francois I. Kabuya writes, "Absolute poverty is subsistence poverty when a person is short of basic foodstuff, shelter, and clothing and adequate or sufficient healthcare."[7] Absolute poverty is illustrated by malnutrition, disease, fetid environment, increased infant mortality, and low life expectancy.

Relative Poverty: This kind of poverty is usually in context to other members and families in society. For example, a family can be considered poor if the family cannot afford vacations, or cannot buy presents for children at Christmas, or cannot send its young to University. Guillaume Iyenda notes, "Poverty under relative terms is what a person lacks in relation to others. Relative poverty is often defined based on comparison of particular aspects of life such as household expenditure, family budget, and household livelihood."[8] The indication is that even though they have access to government support for food, water, medicine, and free housing, they are considered poor because the rest of the community has superior services and amenities. Relative poverty entails having some money but still not enough money to afford anything above the basics. Relative poverty can be permanent or changeable depending on the economic growth of the country. Both absolute and relative poverty prevail in Nigeria and are duly recognized and even mentioned in various National Developments plans.

Situational or transitory poverty, are people or families who are poor because of adversities like earthquakes, droughts, floods, loss of job or serious illness. Kabuya asserts,

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[7] Francois I. Kabuya, "Fundamental Causes of Poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa," *Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 20, no. 6 (2015): 79.

[8] Guillaume Iyenda, "Researching Urban Poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa," *Development in Practice* 17, no. 1 (2007): 28, https://doi.org/10.1080/09614520601092683.

"People can be in transitory or situational poverty because of one unfortunate event. People can help themselves out of this poverty quickly if they are given a bit of assistance."[9] This type of poverty is prevalent in developing countries like Nigeria, because of climate change, job insecurity, and serious ill health of the bread winner of the family.

Rural Poverty occurs in rural or non-metro areas where the population is below 50,000. Rural poverty implies non-availability of job opportunities, poor standard of education, and limited access to social service. According to Gaurav Kumar, rural poverty is the area, "Where there are less job opportunities, less access to services, less support for disabilities, and quality education opportunities."[10] People who face rural poverty issues are mostly seen doing farming and other menial works to their surroundings. Rural poverty is common in Nigeria because of the non-existence of employment opportunities, lack of industries, and infrastructural decay.

Urban poverty occurs in the metropolitan and non-rural areas where the population is more than 50,000. It is when a family lacks necessities; like affordable housing, and live a stressful life. Gaurav Kumar states, "The major challenges faced by the urban poor are; limited access to health and education, inadequate housing and services, violent and unhealthy environment because of overcrowding, little or no social protection mechanism."[11] Like the rural poor, the urban poor lack basic things, they struggle always to survive, and they are faced with harsh economic conditions.

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[9] Kabuya, "Fundamental Causes of Poverty," 79.

[10] Gaurav Kumar, "What Is Poverty and Its Types?," Jagran Josh, April 11, 2018, https://www.jagranjosh.com/general-knowledge/what-is-poverty-and-its-types-1523453034-1.

[11] Kumar, "What Is Poverty and Its Types?"

Primary poverty is a condition where income is inadequate to maintain basic physical existence even if someone spends its money wisely. Primary poverty arises when the expenditure of the family is greater than income. This makes it very challenging for the family, because they cannot afford some of the things they need. Paper Tyari notes that primary poverty "is a condition where income is insufficient to maintain mere physical existence even if money is spent wisely. For example, a family earns $1 per day but requires at least $4 to get food, water, medicine etc. Now even if they spend $1 on food still they may not be able to afford medicines or education requirements of their children."[12] This means families suffering from primary poverty don't have enough money to meet their basic needs. They are living below the poverty line, and it will take them time to improve their income to meet up their needs.

Secondary poverty is a condition where is there is enough to maintain a person's physical existence, but the money is not spent wisely by the person in such a condition. Paper Tyari observes, "For example, a family earns $20 per day but requires at least at least $4 to get food, water, medicine etc. Suppose they spent $18 on family vacation to LA and [are] left with only $2 to meet basic necessities of life, which is not enough to get them food, water etc. If they had spent the money wisely, they could have been able to meet all their basic necessities."[13]

Generational or chronic poverty: This is a more complicated type of poverty. It is when poverty is handed over to individuals and families from generations before them. In this type

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[12] Paper Tyari, "What Is Poverty, Types of Poverty, Poverty Line Explained," Paper Tyari, accessed April 9, 2024, https://papertyari.com/general-awareness/economics/poverty-types-poverty-line-explained/#:~:text=Poverty%20line%20is%20the%20level%20of%20income%20below,defined%20%241.90%20per%20day%20as%20international%20poverty%20line.

[13] Paper Tyari, "What Is Poverty."

there is usually no escape from it, as people are trapped in its causes and have no access to tools that will help them get out of it. According to Jensen, "**Generational poverty** occurs in families where at least two generations have been born into poverty. Families living in this type of poverty are not equipped with the tools to move out of their situations."[14] The people who suffer generational poverty are more likely to remain poor despite how hard they work and try. As the economic system is against them, the majority will not be able to find a way to get out of poverty.

The descriptions of poverty illustrate that poverty is dependent upon variety of factors; like locality or area, environment, and economic conditions of the country. These types of poverty are experienced and are common in Africa, especially in Nigeria because the institutions of empowerment are weak. The political system does not believe in empowering people through long term measures of education, awareness, justice, health, and productivity. In effect, the poor in Nigeria, and other developing countries have emotional and social challenges, health and safety issues and acute and chronic stressors.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the notions and types of poverty. It manifested that poverty is a major social and economic problem that is without a universally acceptable explanation. It

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[14] Eric Jensen, *Teaching with Poverty in Mind: What Being Poor Does to Kids' Brains and What Schools Can Do about It* (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2009), 6.

showed that poverty is a core restriction towards the progress of both the society and human beings. It further indicates that one of the causes of poverty in Nigeria, in spite of her abundant natural and human resources is the uneven distribution of the wealth of the Nation. In the same vein, it maintains that poverty in Nigeria is experienced both in the rural and urban areas. The focus of this study is Nigeria that is why the next chapter will be the history of the country.

Chapter Two: Analysis of Poverty in Nigeria—Colonial to Post-colonial Eras

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the history of Nigeria and an analysis of poverty from the colonial to the post–colonial eras. It will stress how the colonizers encouraged poverty in Nigeria as exemplified by Frantz Fanon, Emmanuel Y. Lartey and Albert Memmi and others. The post-colonial epoch includes military regimes and democratic rules. It will explore how each administration contributed to poverty, which is currently perennial, ubiquitous and hinders the nation's development.

2.2 Brief History of Nigeria

This history is essential because it helps to inform the reader where Nigeria is located, the tribes that make up the country, the location of the geopolitical zones, and the states that make up each geopolitical zone. Nigeria, is officially the Federal Republic of Nigeria, is a country in West Africa. It is the most populous country in Africa; Chinua Achebe notes, "Great Britain was handed the area of West Africa that would later become Nigeria, like a piece of chocolate cake at birthday party. It was one of the most populous regions on the African continent, with over 250 ethnic groups and distinct languages."[1] Geographically, Nigeria is situated between the Sahel to the north, and the Gulf of Guinea to the south in the Atlantic Ocean, covering an area of 923,769 kilometers, with a population of about 211 million. Nigeria borders Cameroon and Chad to the East, Benin to the west and Niger to the north. It has a coastal in the south and that lies on the Gulf of Guinea in the Atlantic Ocean. Nigeria is made up of 36 states and the Federal Capital

[1] Chinua Achebe, *There Was a Country* (New York: Penguin Press, 2002), 1.

Territory, where Abuja, the capital is situated. Nigeria has a lot of historical empires and cultures. The greatest and best-known empires are considered below.

The northern part of the country was the seat of several ancient kingdoms, such as Kanem-Bornu and the Hausa states of Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Daura, and Zaria. These northern states, Shehu Usman Dan Fodio, and his Jihadists absorbed into Muslim Fulani Empire. The Middle Belt of Nigeria was the locus of the glorious Nok kingdom and its world-renowned terra-cotta sculptures. Toyin Falola, Greene Kirk, Anthony H. Millard and J.F. Ade Ajayi, state in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, "Named for the village of Nok, site of some of the finds, the ancient culture produced fine terra-cotta figurines, which were accidentally discovered by tin miners on the Jos Plateau in the 1930s. . . . Its people raised crops and cattle."[2] The middle belt states are Plateau, Nasarawa, Adamawa, Taraba, Niger, Kwara, Kogi, Benue, the Federal capital territory, Southern Kaduna, Southern Bauchi, Southern Kebbi, Southern Gombe, Southern Yobe, and Southern Borno. Because of certain cultural similarities, they are considered as Middle Belt.

The southern protectorate was home to some of the region's most sophisticated civilization. In the west, the Oyo and Ife kingdoms, these two kingdoms are the homes of the Yorubas. The Yorubas, have a monarchical system based on city-states and nucleated villages; a pantheon of gods, a few of which were recognized widely but with several local variations; and divination centered on the deity Ifa, with its corpus of sacred chants. The Yorubaland presently consist of different tribes from different states which are located in the southwestern part of the country, states like Lagos, Oyo, Ondo, Osun, Ekiti, and Ogun.

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[2] Toyin Falola et al, "History of Nigeria," Encyclopedia *Britannica*, March 1, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/topic/history-of-Nigeria.

The Benin Kingdom was a kingdom in what is now southern Nigeria. It has no historical relation to the modern nation-state of Benin, which was historically known as Dahomey from the 17th century until 1975. The kingdom of Benin's capital was Edo, now known as Benin City in Edo state. Benin exercised considerable influence on the western Igbo, who adopted many of the political structures familiar to the Yoruba-Benin region, but Asaba and its immediate neighbors, such as Ibusa, Ogwashi-Ukwu, Okpanam, Issele-Ukwu, were much closer to the Nri kingdom. Currently, the aforementioned towns make up what is called Delta State.

Across the Niger River in the East you have the Igbos. According to the Igbos, the kingdom of Nri is considered to be the foundation of Igbo culture and the oldest kingdom in Nigeria. Elizabeth A. Isichei maintains, "Nri and Aguleri and part of Umueri clan a cluster of Igbo village groups which traces its origins to a sky being called Eri and significantly, includes (From the view point of its Igbo members) the neighboring kingdom of Igala."[3] The Igbo states currently are Anambra, Enugu, Ebonyi, Abia, and Imo. The Igbos have nearby neighbors the Efiks and Rivers people. Efik people have two states Akwa Ibom, and Cross River. Rivers State is only one state called Rivers state. Some of the towns that make up Rivers state are Nembe, Elem Kalabari, Bonny, and Okirika. Close to Rivers state is Bayelsa Sate, with its capital at Yenogoa. In 1856, Britain chartered the Royal Niger Company and in 1900 the company's region came under the leadership of the British government which then consolidated its control over the area of present day Nigeria. Nigeria was then made a British protectorate on January 1st 1901 thus becoming a section of British Empire. Towards the end of the 19th century and

[3] Elizabeth A. Isichei, *A History of the Igbo People* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1975), 18.

beginning of the 20th century, the sovereign kingdoms that would later become Nigeria fought against Britain's attempts to enlarge its territory.

On January 1st 1900, the British Empire created the Southern Protectorate and the Northern Nigeria protectorate. In 1914, the area was formally united as the colony and protectorate of Nigeria. For administrative purposes, the British divided Nigeria into the Northern, and Southern Provinces and Lagos colony. On October 27th 1958, Britain agreed that Nigeria would become an independent state on October 1st 1960. With independence in 1960, a new constitution established a federal system with an elected prime minister and a ceremonial head of state.

On October 1st 1963, Nigeria became a Federal Republic. In 1965 elections were held and the Nigerian National Democratic Party assumed power in the western region of the country. The administration did not last because there was coup in 1966. From 1960-1966, there was no such thing as state in the country. What we had then was the Northern region, Western region, Eastern region, and Mid-Western region. From (6th July 1967 -15 January 1970) was the Nigeria civil war, also known as the Nigerian-Biafran war. In 1967, the regions were dissolved and were replaced by the creation of 12 states. After about ten years, 7 more states were created plus the federal territory, thus making it nineteen states in Nigeria. In 1987, two more states were created. In 1991, the military under General Babangida created nine more states making it thirty states. In 1996, six more states were created. Today, Nigeria has thirty-six states. In 1993, these states were zoned into six geo-political zones. Infoguidenigeria.com/geopolitical-zones-in-nigeria/ states, "Geopolitical zones in Nigeria are a division in the country created by the military regime of the late General Sani Abacha. The states in each zone were carved out and classed on ethnicity

and common and political history."[4] The geopolitical zones are; South East and the states are; (Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo), South- South the states are; (Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Rivers, Edo, and Delta), South West the states are; (Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun and Oyo), North central, the states are; (Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nassarawa, Niger, Plateau, and Abuja), North East, the states are; (Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe) and North West, states are; (Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto, and Zamfara) The geopolitical zones were created for political and administrative purposes. In addition, Nigeria has about 774 local governments. The history of Nigeria will not be completed without mentioning the years the military were in power, and when civilians were in power even though this will be addressed in detail later. The military were in power 1966-1979 and 1983-1998. Nigeria had had four republics (1963-1966), (1979-1983), (1983), (1999-2023).

2.3 Colonial Era and Poverty in Nigeria

Colonial era (1882-1960) is the time the British Empire ruled Nigeria. This started from the mid-nineteenth century until 1960 when Nigeria achieved independence. This subsection will delineate the British rule and how it escalated the level of poverty in Nigeria. The crisis of leadership in Nigeria is painful and agonizing. The leaders have at each era exacerbated poverty by corruption and self- aggrandizement. Surajudeen Mudasiru opines, "The socio-political and economic spheres have been characterized by democratic fraud and subversions, human rights

[4] "6 Geopolitical Zones in Nigeria, their States, and their Economic Activities," Infoguide Nigeria, April 9, 2024, https://www.infoguidenigeria.com/geopoliticalzones-in-nigeria/states.

abuses, violence and crisis riddle, leadership with questionable integrity and corrupt practices."[5] Evidently, there is no exception among the leaders because they have been competing among themselves who will be more corrupt, and who will acquire more. They serve themselves instead of the people. The evaluation of the corrupt practices of the various eras will start with the colonial era that is before Nigeria got her independence in 1960, and after Nigeria got her independence. When Africa is used in this section, it is generic because what happened in one country in Africa, like Nigeria during the colonial period is exactly what happened in the other. More so, the colonization of Africa took place at the same time.

The history of poverty in Nigeria stretches from the colonial era till the present. The colonial period saw Nigeria, and other countries in Africa dwindling economically, socially and politically, S O. Arifolo, notes,

> In the colonial Africa similarly, the political bungalow was impregnated by colonial predators through a deliberate instrumentality of the foreign forces. African states such as Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Egypt, Sudan, Kenya etc. were harnessed and conquered by the British colonial gangsters who used their military forces to conquer and dominate the continent.[6]

The colonial period in Africa especially in Nigeria, was not only a time of domination, it was also a time of brazen exploitation, corruption, disorder, misrule, and imposition. Walter Rodney posits,

> Colonialism was not merely a system of exploitation, but one whose essential purpose was to repatriate the profits to the so-called mother country. From an African view point, that amounted to consistent expatriation of surplus produced by African labor out of African resources. It meant the development of Europe as part of the same dialectical process in which Africa was underdeveloped.[7]

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[5] Surajudeen Mudasiru, "The Legislative and the Political Economy of Corruption in Nigeria," *African Journal of Politics and Society* 1, no. 1 (2015): 10.

[6] S. O. Arifalo, "The Military in Contemporary Africa Politics," in *African History and Culture*, ed. Richard Olaniyan (Lagos: Longman Nigerian Limited, 1982), 150-70.

[7] Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (Baltimore: Black Classic Press, 2011), 149.

The colonizers not only exploited the people, they also annex their lands and resources without their consent and blatantly expand political power over them. To accomplish this, European colonizers came to Africa and their armies were the instruments that they used to conquer, expand and consolidate their hold on the territories.

More so, it is inappropriate to blame the Nigerian military in the face of the colonizers for the woes of Nigeria, this is because military uprising and intervention into politics is not the brain child of Africans, but an imitation from European disorder, which has transmuted into political virus, and infectious in nature. F. O. Adeyemo postulates, "The phenomenon of military coup d'etat is not confined to African alone. It has occurred in Spain, Portugal, Greece, Turkey, Pakistan, and most of Latin and central America such as Nicaragua, Bolivia, Chile, and Argentina."[8] Clearly, military coup d'etat is not alien to the colonizers, so accusing the military for the economic misfortune of Nigeria is untenable. The economic misfortune of Africa, especially Nigeria, goes back to the colonial era.

In addition to the exploitation of Nigerians during the colonial era, the colonizers discriminated against African workers, and this exacerbated poverty. The segregation is felt in the areas of wages, and treatment of workers. Rodney painfully describes,

> There were several reasons why the African worker was more crudely exploited than his European counterpart … Firstly, the alien colonial state had a monopoly of political power, after crushing all opposition by superior armed forces. Secondly, the African working class was small, very dispersed, and very unstable owing to migratory practices. Thirdly, while capitalism was willing to exploit all workers everywhere, European capitalists in Africa had additional racial justifications for dealing unjustly with African worker.[9]

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[8] F. O. Adeyemo, *Government Simple* (Lagos: Frame-Soba-Nigeria, 1986), 238.
[9] Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 150.

Africans suffered this unjust prejudice because of how the colonizers perceived them. The colonized were conceived as inferior, and second-rate. The colonizers assumed Africans, are inferior, second-rate and deserved less wages and substandard treatment. Rodney succinctly states, "The racist theory that the black man was inferior led to the conclusion that he deserved lower wages; … wages paid to workers in Europe and North America were much higher than wages paid to African workers in comparable categories."[10] Because of naked power, Africans were oppressed in their own land. They were made second class citizens in their own countries. This was done by the colonizers because they perceived Africans as belonging to the "zone of non-being"[11] Belonging to the zone of non-being means, the colonizers regarded the colonized as people who are below the line of human. They are considered sub-human or non-human. The people considered as sub-human or non-being, do not have their humanity socially recognized. In essence, the colonizers questioned the personhood and dignity of the colonized. This perception of the colonized as non-person, emboldened the colonizers, to maintain that the colonized does not deserved to be helped, and therefore subject to injustice and extermination.

The colonizers by addressing the colonized as sub-human intensified their exploitation and subjugation of the colonized. The colonized is perceived as not being civilized and therefore should be dominated. Emmanuel Y. Lartey notes, "Colonization…dehumanizes even the most civilized man; that colonial activity, colonial

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[10] Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 151.
[11] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Groove Press, 1967), 5.

> enterprise, colonial conquest, which is based on contempt for the native and justified by that contempt inevitably tends to change him who undertakes it, that the colonizer, who in order to ease his conscience gets into the habit of seeing the other man as an animal, accustoms himself to treating him like an animal, and tends objectively to transform himself into an animal…."[12]

This manner of regarding the colonized as animal means they have no moral and civil sense. The colonized is flawed and has no conscience and, therefore, is liable to be dominated. Ascribing the colonized as an animal made the colonizers exploit the colonized and continued to forcefully take the raw materialsl of the colonized to develop their countries. The colonizers, addressing the colonized as animals, planted the seed of racism and discrimination. The colonized were judged by the color of their skin instead of the content of their head. The effect of this discrimination is that the colonized faced undue hardship, and the colonizers continued to expand their territories at the detriment of the colonized. It is disheartening that the colonizers perceived the colonized in this way only to make them feel inferior to exploit them economically, socially, politically, cultural and spiritually. It is because of this inordinate domination that Fanon stated that colonialism should be replaced by decolonization. He writes, "Decolonization, therefore, implies the urgent need to thoroughly challenge the colonial situation. Its definition can, if we want to describe it accurately, be summed up in the well-known words: "The last shall be first." Decolonization is verification of this."[13] This will restore to the colonized his humanity, dignity

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[12] Emmanuel Lartey, *Postcolonializing God: An African Practical Theology*, xv.
[13] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 2.

and his pride. It will grant the colonized the ability to control the resources in his country and develop his places. The colonized will be able to stop the expansion of the colonizers.

The colonized were discriminated when it comes to wages. Africans employed in the senior categories never received the same salary with the colonizers. The colonizers made sure Africans were paid less, treated as sub-human, and castigated at all levels. Rodney writes, "Colonial governments discriminated against the employment of Africans in senior categories; and whenever it happened that a white and a black filled the same post, the white man was sure to be paid considerably more. This was true at all levels, ranging from civil service posts to mine workers."[14] This is exploitation without consideration, and without responsibility. Africans suffered this in human segregation because, the colonizers regarded Africans as belonging to the group of "Unthought-of."[15] This indicates that Africans are undesirable, unwanted, unintelligent, not well developed, and should be forgotten. They are inferior and therefore deserved to be treated unfairly, and in humanely.

Additionally, the mistreatment of Africans is not only in the civil service. African self-employed peasants were exploited by the colonizers. They were exploited by the intermediaries brought from outside Africa. Rodney embellishes,

> A peasant growing a cash crop or collecting produce had his labor exploited by a long chain of individuals, starting with local business men. Sometimes, these local businessmen were Europeans. Very rarely were they Africans, and more usually they were a minority group brought in from outside and serving as intermediaries between the white colonialists and the exploited African peasant. In West Africa, the Lebanese and Syrians played this role; while in East Africa the Indians rose to this position.[16]

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[14] Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 152.
[15] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 15.
[16] Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 154.

This subjugation by the colonizers, and the middle men they brought in left the peasant Africans practically with nothing and helpless. They lacked cash crop, have no substantial capital of their own. They relied on chance for their businesses to progress, for instance, they relied on the existence of one crop to another, and depended on bounty harvest, and good prices. On the event of any disaster they borrowed. Rodney comments, "Any bad harvest or fall of prices caused the peasants to borrow in order to find money to pay taxes and buy certain necessities. As security, they mortgaged their future crops to money lenders in the middleman category. Non- payment of debts could and did lead to their farms being taken away by the money lenders. The rate of interest on the loans was always fantastically high, amounting to what is known as "usury"[17] Instead of assisting the colonized, the colonizers oppressed them to the extent of taxing them even when they are unable to cope. The financial challenges of the colonized were of no consequence to the colonizers. The colonizers regarded the colonized as an indentured servant. As a chattel, the colonized will have to work their own financial freedom. This type of condition, made it impossible for the colonized to have a strong financial statues or progress. Even to owe land and crops to cultivate became a struggle for the colonized.

The introduction of capitalism by the colonizers worsened the financial stability of the colonized. Capitalism, whose basic ideology is the control of a state's trade and industry by private owners rather than the state for profit, brought economic devastation to the colonized. The colonizers brought in their big companies which gravely exploited and ruined African business men. Rodney weeps,

> The share of profits which went to middlemen was insignificant in comparison to those profits reaped by big European business interests and by the European governments

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[17] Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 154.

> themselves. The capitalist institution which came into most direct contact with African peasants was the colonial trading company: that is to say, a company specializing in moving goods to and from the colonies. The most notorious were the French concerns, Compagnie Francaise D'Afrique Occidentale (CFAO) and Societe Commerciale Quest Africaine (SCOA), and the British controlled United African Company (UAC). These were responsible for expatriating a great proportion of African's wealth produced by peasant toil.[18]

The colonizers ripped –off the colonized with capitalism because the colonizers interpreted the colonized as "Thingnification."[19] The colonizers reduced the colonized as a thing, somebody without moral values, lazy, irrational animal, and "underserving."[20] Because the colonized is underserving according to the colonizers his or her dignity as a human being should not be promoted, therefore he should be oppressed.

Another channel, by which the colonizers exploited the colonized, was through shipping companies. The shipping companies were those established by the colonizers, and they obeyed the colonizers without questioning. The shipping companies transported goods from the land of the colonized to the land of the colonizers. In the transportation of goods, the colonizers treated the colonizer unfairly. They did this by charging African peasants more than required. The colonized had no option than to pay, thereby losing the little money they made on shipping alone. Rodney laments,

> The shipping companies constituted an exploitative channel that cannot be overlooked. The largest shipping companies were those under the flags of the colonizing nations, especially the British. The shippers were virtually a law unto themselves, being very favorably regarded by their home governments as earners of super profits, as stimulators of industry and trade, as carriers of mail, and as contributors to the navy when war came. African peasants had absolutely no control over the freight rates which were charged, and actually paid more than citizens in other lands.[21]

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[18] Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 154.
[19] Aime Cesaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1972), 9.
[20] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, 32.
[21] Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 161.

It is shocking how the colonizers impoverished the colonized in everything. This raises the question whether the colonizers brought development or backwardness to the colonized. It is imperative that the colonizers enslaved the colonized in order to make profit, and better their countries. The colonized became dominated, voiceless, and conquered in their land.

Not satisfied with exploiting Africans by the shipping companies, the colonizers used financial institutions to subjugate the colonizers. Banks, refused to grant loans, and Insurance companies declined to cover Africans workers, business men and women in case of any misadventure. The refusal of the banks to give loans, and insurance to cover them made it impossible for Africans to establish, and maintain their businesses. Rodney expresses,

> In the background of the colonial scene hovered banks, insurance companies, maritime underwriters and other financial houses. One can say "in the background" because the peasant or worker never dealt directly with such institutions, and was generally ignorant of their exploiting functions. The peasants or workers had no access to bank loans because he had no "securities" or "collateral."… In epoch of imperialism, the bankers became the aristocrats of the capitalist world, so in another sense they were very much in the foreground.[22]

The colonizers deliberately never taught the colonized the implications of capitalism. Therefore Africans were unable to comprehend the banking system. They could not access bank loans to maintain their businesses. The discrimination and repression the colonized suffered from the colonizers made it very fertile for the colonized to become poor. The systems of the colonizers were unfavorable to the colonized because the colonizers were not open, and were not real to the colonized.

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[22] Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 162.

The colonizers hid several things from the colonized. This enabled the colonizers to hoodwink, exploit and cheat the colonized. Always, the colonizers manipulated the system to accomplish their objectives to the detriment of the colonized. Supporting, Rodney enunciates,

> In addition to private companies, the colonial state also engaged directly in the economic exploitation and impoverishment of Africa. The equivalent of the colonial office in each colonizing country worked hand in hand with their governors in Africa to carry out a number of functions, the principal ones being as follows…to guarantee optimum conditions under which private companies could exploit Africans.[23]

The agents of the colonizers are very active in what they did. They worked hand in glove with their home government to achieve their goals. Their home government gave them the desired protection, and excellently equipped them in their infamous activities. The laws they promulgated, were all in favor of the egregious and nefarious things they did against the colonized. They used political power, forced labor, and taxed and exploited the colonized excessively, only to use the proceeds to improve their own infrastructure, and neglected the colonized. It became extremely difficult for the colonized to survive economically, and have wealth under this unjust situation.

Even though, it is no news that the colonizers exploited and controlled the colonized. On the one hand, the colonizers also contributed positively to the colonized. Evidently, the colonizers built roads, railroads, schools, hospitals, houses, and established industries for the colonized. These social services assisted the colonized in her progress. Whether the infrastructure the colonizers built were commensurate to how much they exploited the colonized or whether it was equal and exact to what they built in their own land is not the concern of this research.

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[23] Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 163.

In addition to social services, the colonizers were careful how they ruled their colonies. They appointed conscientious and proficient fellows to run the affairs of the colonized. Chinua Achebe supports,

> The British governed their colony of Nigeria with considerable care. There was a very highly competent cadre of government officials imbued with a high level of knowledge of how to run a country. This was not something that the British achieved only in Nigeria; they were able to manage this on a bigger scale in India and Australia. The British had the experience of governing and doing it competently.[24]

This is to say that the colonizers had some benevolent intention in their dealership with the colonized. It was not only domination and oppression. They also brought crucial development to the colonized. In spite of the accomplishments of the colonizers, poverty has remained very embarrassing in Nigeria.

2.4 Postcolonial Period

The postcolonial era started immediately the colonizers declared Nigeria as an independent state in 1960. This marked the end of British rule in Nigeria. With the end of Western colonialism, Nigeria started self-rule. This segment will explore how various post-colonial periods accelerated poverty in Nigeria, starting with the military and then various civilian administrations.

Military rule began in 1966, and according to Felicia T. Okofu Military rule means, "A system of government where there is complete or substantial control exerted over political authority. Now the thing is that the political power completely resides with the armed forces and

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[24] Chinua Achebe, *There Was a Country*, 43.

so they have the final say."[25] The military claimed they came to power among other things to correct some anomalies in the country like corruption, mismanagement of public funds, low level economic development, and regional differences because they controlled the political, economic, and social affairs of the country. Since then, there have been cases of military coups in Nigeria. It has been by means of coups, and counter coups that the military ruled Nigeria for thirty years.

The military ruled Nigeria for thirty years out of its first forty years of independence. Military governments were in power from 1966-1979, and from 1983-1999 except three months in 1993 that saw an interim civilian administration. Claude Ake testifies, "Thus Nigeria is a classic example of a militarized state which consists of the use of (or the threat of) violence, the curtailment of freedom of opinion, the domination of military values over civilian life, the violation of human rights, extrajudicial killings and the gross repression of the people."[26] The military because they have political power, and ruled the country so long a time, introduced thuggery in politics, lack of commitment to what ideal state should be, ethnicity, bureaucratic incompetence and religious extremism. They played a core, and major role in engulfing Nigeria into poverty. The military did this by elevating and instituting corruption. Darren Kew analyzes,

> The giant was brought to its knees by 20 years of brutal and corrupt military rule, which left a legacy of executive dominance and political corruption in the hands of Nigeria's so-called godfathers—powerful political bosses sitting atop vast patronage networks who view the government primarily through the lens of their own personal enrichment.[27]

This implies that the military tragically started shortly after independence to drain Nigeria of her resources, and showed little or no interest in the living conditions of the citizens. The military

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[25] Felicia T. Okofu, *Military Rule in Nigeria-History and Impacts (Explained)*, 2020.

[26] Claude E. Ake, "What is the problem of Ethnicity in Africa?" Transformation: Critical perspectives on South Africa (1993), 1-14. http://digital.lib. Msu.edu/projects/African.

[27] Darren Kew, "Nigeria," in *Countries at the Crossroads*, ed. Sanja Tatic (New York: Freedom House, 2006), 73, https://www.laits.utexas.edu/africa/ads/1578.html.

never promoted the rule of law. They circumvented all mechanism designated to defend accountability, integrity, and transparency. The very things the military indicated they came to correct; are the very things they did with impunity. This remained unchallenged and unchecked thereby amplified the poverty level in Nigeria.

2.4.1 The First Military Junta (1966)

As noted above, military rule started in Nigeria in 1966. The military came purporting they would clean the Augean stable of the civilian regime in Nigeria. How the first military junta fared in their mission will be evaluated in this section. The first Military Junta started under the leadership of Major General Aguyi Thomas Ironsi, who accused the First Republic under the leadership of Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the Prime Minister, and Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe, the president of widespread corruption, and looting of public funds with impunity. They alleged that the ministers of that time displayed their wealth without caution. Additionally, they accused the First Republic of lacking men of good character, whose politics was stated to be that of material gain, making money and living well. The editorial of the *Daily Times* newspaper of January 16, 1966 manifests,

> With the transfer of authority of the Federal Government to the Armed Forces, we reached a turning point in our national life. The old order has changed, yielding place to a new one. … For a long time, instead of settling down to minister to people's needs, the politicians were busy performing series of seven day wonders as if the act of government was some circus show … still we groped along as citizens watched politicians scorn the base by which they did ascend.[28]

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[28] Editorial, *Daily Times* (Lagos, Nigeria), January 16, 1966, quoted in John Sunday Ojo et al., "Boko Haram Insurgency and Defense Corruption," in *Global Encyclopedia of Public Administration, Public Policy, and Governance*, ed. A. Farazmand (Cham: Springer, 2020), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-31816-5_3944-1.

The expectation was that the soldiers would use their comparative advantage, and the employment of naked force to literally intimidate people into compliance with the nation's laws and subsequently rid society of corruption and poverty. Unfortunately, the military which assumed power in 1966 through military coup promising to combat corruption and poverty bequeathed to Nigeria the cankerworm that is called poverty, corruption and economic down turn.

The General Aguiyi Thomas Ironsi military government that replaced the sacked civilian regime instituted a series of commissions of inquiry to investigate the activities of some government establishments and to probe the widespread corruption that characterized the public service sector of the deposed regime, Okonkwo narrates,

> The Ironsi government instituted a series of commissions of inquiry into affairs of the Nigeria Railway Corporation, the Electricity Corporation of Nigeria, Nigeria Airways, and the Nigeria Ports Authority. The report on the Ports Authority revealed that a number of ministers, . . . had formed companies and used their influence to secure contracts. . . . Dr. Ikejiani, Chairman of the Nigerian Railway Corporation, was found guilty of misallocation of funds and disregarding the Board and recognized procedures of the NRC.[29]

The zeal to punish the wrong doers of the First Republic died with Gowon's coup of July 1966, which ousted the Ironsi government. The politicians in detention were freed. This development had serious implications for the polity as the new set rulers embarked on white elephant projects, which served as a means of looting public funds. The ensuing development clearly showed that the military rulers were not better nor different from the ousted civilian leaders. This military regime lasted for about seven months, and was toppled by another military coup.

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[29] Rina Okonkwo, "Corruption in Nigeria 1947–2002: An Historical Perspective," in *African Humanities: Humanities and Nation Building*, 6th ed., ed. Francis Anyika et al. (Nsukka, Nigeria: Afro-Orbis, 2005), 81-88, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/310167600_Corruption_in_Nigeria_1947-2002_An_Historical_Perspective_in_Africasn_Humanities_Humanities_and_National_Building.

On July 29, 1966, there was a counter coup that led to the emergence of Lt. Col. Yakubu Gowon. (1966-1975). It was the regime that went through the civil war. Gowon, ruled the country at a time Nigeria experienced an unprecedented wealth from the oil boom of the 1970s. The administration of Gowon was accused of corruption and many of the government officials were found guilty of corrupt practices. According to Michael M. Ogbeidi, "By 1974, reports of unaccountable wealth of Gowon's military governors and other public office holders had become the crux of discussion in the various Nigerian dailies."[30] The deduction is that when those in power are corrupt, the consequence will be overt poverty. This is exactly the case with Nigeria. As the political leadership is after self-gratification, the rest of the people are devastated by poverty. Poverty in Nigeria is endemic because military leaders became very corrupt and selfish. They like the civilian rulers could not correct the anomalies that prompted them to come to power.

In July 1975, the Gowon administration was overthrown by another military coup. The coup was led by General Murtala Muhammed, who emerged as the head of the state (1975-1976) Murtala Mohammed accused the Gowon regime of widespread corruption. The persons found guilty were dismissed from the military with ignominy. They were also forced to give up ill-acquired properties considered to be in the excess of their earnings. Because of widespread corruption, Murtala Mohammed, established the Belgore commission of inquiry to investigate the cement Armada," Ogbeidi demonstrates,

> The Commission indicted the Gowon government of inflating contracts for cement on behalf of the Ministry of Defence for private profit at a great cost to the government. In its Report, the Commission noted that the Ministry of Defence needed only 2.9 million

[30] Michael M. Ogbeidi, "Political Leadership and Corruption in Nigeria since 1960: A Socio-economic Analysis," *Journal of Nigeria Studies* 1, no. 2 (Fall 2012): 7, https://www.unh.edu/nigerianstudies/articles/Issue2/Political_leadership.pdf.

> tons of cement at a cost of N52 million as against the 16 million metric tons of cement, it ordered, at a cost of N557 million (Afolabi, 1993). Similar commissions of inquiry were constituted by the new state governments which resulted in the immediate dismissal of several corrupt officials.[31]

The incessant corruption in the political leadership of Nigeria has become cancerous that it is difficult to have any meaningful economic plan and development. This lack of economic ideology has heightened poverty and hunger in Nigeria.

General Murtala Mohammed, administration was short lived because he was assassinated in another coup d'etat after six months. With that General Olusegun Obasanjo, became the head of state from (1976-1979) Obasanjo did not show much zeal to combat corruption, as was done by his predecessor Murtala Mohammed. Corruption exceedingly thrived during the administration of Obasanjo. The good news is that Obasanjo ensured that the reins of government were transferred to civilians in October 1979.

2.4.2 The Second Military Junta (1983-1998)

The objective of this segment is to investigate how the military came back to power, how they dealt with the issue of economic hardship, and corruption. Whether they succeeded or not in curbing the above anomalies is what follows. Democratic rule surfaced in Nigeria for the second time (1979-1983) after those few years of democratic rule which is termed second republic in Nigeria, the military through coup came back to power. The second military junta started on December 31st 1983. General Muhammadu Buhari, led a popular coup that ousted the civilian administration. He ruled from (1984-1985) Buhari as head of state, promised to bring corrupt

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[31] Ogbeidi, "Political Leadership and Corruption in Nigeria," 8.

officials and their cronies to book. Consequently, state governors and commissioners were arrested and brought before tribunal of inquiry. Regrettably, the Buhari regime never promoted human rights in its effort to restore discipline, and sanity in public life. He was toppled by General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida on August 27, 1985.

On August 27, 1985, General Ibrahim Badamosi Babangida, staged a coup that ousted Buhari regime. Babangida ruled from (1985-1993) There was no serious attempted to stop corruption. If anything, corruption reached its apogee, and became institutionalized during Babangida's regime. According to Osoba,

> The main distinguishing feature of corruption in the Babaginda regime was the pervasive culture of impunity any of his acolytes, however high or low in status, could loot the treasury to their heart's content with impunity, provided they remained absolutely loyal and committed to the leader. Those who backslide or waver in their loyalty and commitment were terrorized with all the coercive instruments of state power, even when they had done no wrong.[32]

Babangida encouraged corruption and pardoned corrupt officials convicted by his predecessors and returned their seized properties; the regime primarily and basically sanctioned corruption in the country and made it difficult to apply the only potent measures, long prison terms and seizure of ill-gotten wealth, for fighting corruption in Nigeria in the future. In the face of intense public opposition to his rule, Babangida reluctantly handed over power to a non-elected civilian Interim National Government on August 26, 1993.

The interim National Government was overthrown by General Sani Abacha. Abacha (1993-1998) Abacha, furthered the deep-seated corrupt practices, which already characterized the public since the inception of the Babanginda regime. Ogbeidi sorrowfully embellishes,

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[32] S. O. Osoba, "Corruption in Nigeria: Historical Perspectives," *Review of African Political Economy* 23, no. 69 (1996): 371-386.

> Under General Abacha, corrupt practices became blatant and systematic. General Abacha and his family alongside his associates looted Nigeria's coffers with reckless abandon. The extent Abacha's venality seemed to have surpassed that of other notorious African rulers, such as Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire (now called the Democratic Republic of Congo). It was estimated that the embezzlement of public funds and corrupt proceeds of General Abacha and his family amounted to USD 4 billion.[33]

General Abacha, to support his corrupt practices, neglected the rule of law, and enacted Decree No.12 of 1994, which officially removed the authority of the courts to investigate, let alone challenge, the actions of members of the regime. Abacha, dovetailed Nigeria into a family company in which every member was a stakeholder. General Abacha died suddenly of heart attack in 1998, and was replaced by General Abdulsalami Abubakar. Abacha became one of the most egregious example of corruption in Africa. His regime intensified unemployment, insecurity and corruption which aggravated poverty. Nigerians remember Abacha as the father of corruption, who also failed to promote human rights.

Abdusalami Abubakar, (1998-1999), even though had a very brief administration, elevated corruption to satisfied his urge and those of his associates before leaving office. According to Anthony A. Akinola, "The Christopher Kolade inquiry set up by President Obasanjo indicted the Abubakar administration in its findings over contracts awards and financial transactions that were hastily made between June 1998 and May 1999."[34] Abubakar subsequently handed over the reins of government to a democratically elected civilian government in May 1999 after having spent eleven months in power.

Nigerians, having experienced several military regimes, became convinced that the military are victims of the abnormalities they came to correct. In addition to counter coups and

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[33] Ogbeidi, "Political Leadership and Corruption in Nigeria," 9.

[34] Anthony A. Akinola, "Akinola: Nigeria's History of Corruption," *The Guardian*, January 14, 2015, guardian.ng/opinion/columnists/akinola-nigeria-s-history-of-corruption.

bloodshed, each military regime failed in its mission to fight corruption and minimize poverty. The military were reckless in their regimes. Instead of improving the country, they succeeded in lavishing the country's wealth and resources on themselves and their acquaintances. They cared less about the people they governed, and never gave adequate attention to infrastructural development. Evidently, this bizarre situation aggravated poverty, and hardship.[35]

It was not all negative with military regimes. Military regimes contributed seemingly to the improvement of infrastructure in the country, they build roads, railways, airports, and hospitals among others. They also created more states and established some institutions to check corruption. Why those institutions they established to check corruption did succeed will be considered later. Nigerians experienced both the negative and positive sides of the military rule in Nigeria which has resulted in a cry for democracy. Therefore in 1999, Nigeria returned to democratic rule. This part of the essay has manifested that the military accomplished very little to improve the economic condition and to nip corruption on the bud. Because they have military power they did not respect human dignity. Their interest was enriching themselves and their cronies. They left the country divided and economically shattered.

2.5 Democratic Era

Nigeria's democracy has been delicate and inconsistent since independence. Each democratic rule has struggled to create a sense of national unity and integration in a complex country with varied ethnic groups. As a result of obvious and distinct differences in the country,

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[35] Ogbeidi, "Political Leadership and Corruption in Nigeria," 1-22.

democracy as a form of government, its process, and its benefits have been a challenge to the country. This sector will evaluate the performance of different democratic periods Vis a-vis the existential level of poverty and corruption in the country.

Democratic rule started properly in Nigeria in 1999, when Olusegun Obasanjo was elected the president of Nigeria, and commander-in-chief was elected the president of Nigeria and commander-in-chief of the armed forces. Even though, before then, there was a brief democratic rule (1963-1966) under Tafawa Belewa as prime minister and Nnamdi Azikiwe as the president. Democracy, as a form of government, was welcomed by Nigerians. Nigerians applauded it because democracy deals with the people participating in the affairs of the government. According to Larry Diamond of Stanford University, democracy is "a political system for choosing and replacing the government through free and fair elections. It is the active participation of the people, as citizens, in politics and civic life; Protection of the human rights of all citizens and a rule of law, in which the laws and procedures apply equally to all citizens."[36] Apparently, with this classical description of democracy, Nigerians were eager to rip the dividends of democracy. There were curious to participate actively in electing, and been elected for the smooth running of the country. They became excited to have a voice on how they are governed. Nigerians became ready to make sure that the rule of law was followed and justice, human rights, and dignity were promoted. With this in mind the first Republic came into being in Nigeria.

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[36] Larry Diamond, "The Meanings of Democracy: Introduction," *Journal of Democracy* 21, no. 4 (October 2010): 102-105. https://muse.jhu.edu/article/398734.

2.5.1 The First Republic (1963-1966)

Immediately after the first military rule in 1966, Nigeria ushered in a civilian regime. Nigerians welcomed the civilian administration because the military failed in its bid to curb poverty and corruption. How the civilians ruled, and the impact of poverty and corruption will be the crucial matter to be evaluated.

The First Republic, under the leadership of Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the prime minister, and Nnamdi Azikiwe, the president, as noted above, was identified as very corrupt because the prominent politicians of the first republic were flamboyant, lived luxuriously, and plundered public funds. They were indicted for corruption and self-enrichment. Major Chukwuma Kaduna Nzeogwu, described the politicians of first Republic as "Ten-percenters", i.e., they demanded 10 percent of the value of contracts awarded. In fact, many politicians, both at the regional and federal levels of government, were indicted by the military administration that eventually took over the reins of government.[37] Even though they demanded 10 percent of contracts awarded, unfortunately, some of those contracts were not executed. This unimaginable and egregious attitude of the First Republic officials has continued till date. The irony is that corruption, and plundering of public property is getting worse with both military and democratic dispensations. This unholy attitude has dangerously plunged Nigeria into abject poverty. The first republic officers, in their effort to improve the country, relapsed into self-aggrandizement, thereby elevating poverty and corruption. This has continued till date. A cursory look at the second Republic and other dispensations will buttress this.

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[37] Anthony Akinola, *History of Corruption*, 2015.

2.5.2 The Second Republic (1979-1983)

The first republic was not what Nigerians anticipated and hoped for. It was a disaster. People were frustrated and devastated because the level of poverty was unprecedented. The disappointment of Nigerians gave rise to the Second Republic. This part will demonstrate how the rulers of the second republic navigated the affairs of Nigeria, and how they handled corruption which is one of the paramount reasons that gives rise to poverty in Nigeria. As the First Republic was known for overt corruption, the Second Republic, under President Shehu Shagari, was catastrophic as it marked the return of political termites and the canonization of corruption. The president did nothing to stop the looting of public funds by elected officials. Dash explains,

> Corruption among political leaders was amplified due to greater availability of funds. It was claimed that over $16 billion in oil revenues were lost between 1979 and 1983 during the reign of President Shehu Shagari. It became quite common, for federal buildings to mysteriously go up in flames, most especially just before the onset of ordered audits of government accounts, making it impossible to discover written evidence of embezzlement and fraud.[38]

No politician symbolized the graft and avarice under Shagari's government more than his combative Transport Minister and in-law Alhaji Umaru Dikko who was alleged to have mismanaged about four billion naira (#4 billion) of public fund meant for importation of rice. The case of corruption during Shagari's regime was aching, irritating and agonizing that caused his administration to end up in the same cesspool like the rest before him. Shagari improved the living standards of the people minimally. The abysmal failure of the second republic disillusioned Nigerians because it glorified corruption and poverty. The dissatisfaction of

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[38] Leon Dash, "Mysterious Fires Plague Nigerian Investigations," *Washington Post*, February 26, 1983, https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1983/02/27/mysterious-fires-plague-nigerian-investigations/51b50b62-392f-4455-acbd-5d713364dbc0/.

Nigerians with the second republic gave rise to the third republic, which was eagerly awaited because Nigerians wanted a positive change.

2.5.3 The Third Republic (1992-1993)

The Second Republic was unsatisfactorily to Nigerians. There was enormous mismanagement of funds that exacerbated the economic challenges of the people, with that the third republic became expedient. The Third Republic was an unsuccessful attempt to restore Nigeria to democracy. It was initiated by General Ibrahim Babangida, who also annulled the result of the election. This threw the whole nation into chaos. This republic lasted for a very short time. This transient administration was painful to Nigerians and heightened the anticipation for another republic.

2.5.4 The Fourth Republic (1999-2023)

Olusegun Obasanjo ruled Nigeria as a military general. With his coming back to power as a civilian head of state, Nigeria hived a sigh of relief because they thought he will do better since as a former military administrator he would be abreast with the challenges of the country especially regarding poverty and good governance. This subdivision will trace the history of the fourth republic and how it fared in the management of the country.

The republic was inaugurated, and Obasanjo, in all ramifications, disappointed the citizens by his gimmick to elongate his regime without meaningfully ameliorating the economic pain of the people. General Olusegun Obasanjo came back to power and was addressed as President Olusegun Obasanjo because he became a civilian president. There was high hope placed on Obasanjo by the people that he would correct some of the anomalies, but hopes were

dashed as corruption reached a crescendo in his regime as a democratically elected president. Obasanjo turned out to be one of the worst, despite his campaign on anti-corruption. Adebanjo regretfully observes,

> The hope that Nigeria's return to democratic rule in 1999 would mark an appreciable from the corrupt past turned out to be betrayed. The democratic government of Obasanjo, a former military ruler and respected international statesman who had handed power to civilians in 1979, was expected to be a bridge between the military and civilians the North and South: a new broom who would sweep out the corruption and abuses of military brass hats who had lost any sense of purpose beyond plundering the national treasury and brutally pummeling innocent citizens into submission.[39]

However, Obasanjo's government was ridden not only with corruption but also failed in the development of infrastructure. The hope the country reposed on Obasanjo was rubbished because, for example, he claimed he spent about $2 billion in reconstructing roads and over one trillion naira on the power sector. Unfortunately, the country is without a dependable power supply, evidence of absolute corruption that motivates poverty.

Obasanjo, on the one hand, had some positive contributions to the growth of Nigeria. According to Adebajo,

> Despite his flawed regime, Obasanjo's rule was not without some merits. Early in his first term in office, he correctly identified Nigeria's debt issue as an obstacle to sustainable development. Along with his reliable finance minister (between 2003 and 2006) Ngozi Okonja-Iweala, he was able to broker a deal that effectively wiped out Nigeria's entire $30 billion external debt by paying $12.4 billion and having $17.6 billion annulled. This was the largest such financial deal in Sub-Sahara Africa.[40]

Subsequently, Obasanjo, being aware of the decades of systemic corruption perpetuated by the successive political leadership of Nigeria and the devastating effects it had on the country

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[39] A. Adebajo, "Hegemony on a Shoestring: Nigeria's Post-Cold War Foreign Policy," in *Gulliver's Troubles: Nigeria's Foreign After the Cold War*, ed. A. Adebajo and R. Mustapha (Scottsville, South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008), 12.

[40] Adebajo, "Hegemony on a Shoestring," 12.

he Obasanjo, strengthen the existing anti-corruption laws and established two important anti-corrupt institutions—the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) - to tackle the phenomenon of corruption in public and private squarely.

The ICPC was inaugurated on 29th September 2000 by the Obasanjo. The commission was established to "Target corruption in the public sector, especially cases of bribery, gratification graft, and abuse or misuse of office (The Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offenses Act, 2000). The EFCC was established in 2003, "partially in response to pressure from the Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF), which named Nigeria among twenty-three non-cooperative countries frustrating the efforts of the international community to fight money laundering (EFCC (Establishment) Act, 2002). Unlike ICPC, the EFCC investigates people in all sectors who appear to be living above their means."[41] Both bodies have helped immensely in the fight against corruption in the country. They have assisted in recovering tangible sums of money from some corrupt individuals. Agbiboa asserts,

> Obasanjo's Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), spearheaded by the fearless Nuhu Ribadu, recovered over $5 billion in stolen assets and prosecuted corrupt businessmen and policemen." For instance, in an unprecedented move in 2005. Tofa Balogun, Nigeria's inspector General of Police, was convicted of corruption and jailed; Fabian Osuji, education minister, and Mobolaji Osomo, housing and Urban development minister, were dismissed from office for respectively bringing legislators to pass a budget and selling government properties.[42]

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[41] Ogbeidi, "Political Leadership and Corruption in Nigeria," 10-11.

[42] Daniel E. Agbiboa, "As It Was Beginning: The Vicious Cycle of Corruption on Nigeria," *Studies in Sociology of Science* 4, no. 3 (2013): 10-21.

Regrettably, the corruption clean- up of Obasanjo, was ephemeral. Their efforts have not resulted in the eradication of the phenomenon called corruption. His regime became filled with ineffective and grandiose promises that lacked merit.

Furthermore, Obasanjo himself dismissed one of the most effective and fearless ministers in his administration Ngozi Okonja-Iweala. On a strong note, Obasanjo was accused of using (EFCC) as the best organ to witch-hunt his political enemies, thereby deviating from its main objective. The International Crisis Group noted despondently,

> The EFCC was used (by Obasanjo) as a political weapon to whip political foes, especially state governors likely to stand for the presidency and their supporters into line. To this end, five state governors, some of whom were considered contenders for the PDP presidential nomination, were impeached in 2005-2006 on allegations of corruption. Obasanjo's botched attempt to change the Nigerian constitution in April 2006 to afford him the opportunity of running a third presidential term badly damaged whatever democratic credentials he had.[43]

With Obasanjo's ambition of getting a third term bid, his regime became convoluted. Nigerians were disgusted with him because he deviated from his primary objective. His action was contrary to the constitution and therefore anti progress and development. The fourth republic further worsened the economic situation of Nigerians and elevated poverty. Given that reality, Obasanjo had no other option than to call for an election that saw Yar'Adua emerge as the president.

Yar'dua's regime (2007-2010) was welcomed with enthusiasm because Nigerians were appalled with Obasanjo. Even though Yar'dua's administration did not last long, Nigerians did not see him as the expected Messiah. He took ill and died before the expiration of his first four

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[43] Agbiboa, "As It Was Beginning," 1-6.

years. His death on May 4, 2010, led to the swearing-in of his vice Goodluck Jonathan, as the new president on May 5th, 2010.

When Jonathan Goodluck took over, there was jubilation in the country because, for once, Nigerians noted that a well-educated person had taken over power. He would be able to comprehend the problems and challenges of the country and will effectively proffer solutions. How Jonathan piloted the affairs of the country will be the core of this part.

Jonathan surprised Nigerians because he did nothing impressive to improve the overall condition of Nigerians. His administration was termed one of the most corrupt. The Punch Newspaper reports,

> President Jonathan has been accused of allowing a high level of corruption to breed in Nigeria during his tenor. The central bank Governor Lamido Sanusi accused the president that $20 Billion out of the oil reserve was missing and unaccounted for. His petroleum minister, Alison Madueke, was probed by the House of Representatives, Nigeria's lower legislative chamber, for managing the country's resources. It was indicated that the minister "used 500,000 Euro (an equivalent of $130million) to maintain private jet in the last two years, yet with the president's backing, little or nothing was done to remove her from office.[44]

Several others in his administration were accused of embezzlement, this included his wife Dame Patience Jonathan with poor educational background yet a permanent secretary a position she did not qualify for.

Jonathan had a very stimulating agenda to improve the country and followed it at the beginning of his administration; why he could not continue with it is painful and regrettable. The uninspiring administration of Jonathan cannot be forgotten easily because of intense hunger

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[44] Onwuka Azuka, "Is President Jonathan Right to Say Most Corruption is Just Stealing?," Punch Newspaper, 2014.

experienced by the people. The non-performance of Jonathan as the president catalyzed the coming back to power of Mohammad Buhari as a civilian president.

Jonathan handed over to President Mohammed Buhari, as a civilian president. (2015-2023) Buhari, is the second person to rule Nigeria twice. The first was Olusegun Obasanjo. Both ruled Nigeria as military generals, and then as civilian heads of state. The regime of Buhari as the civilian head of state will be epicenter of this division. How he steered the economic, political, social and cultural affairs of Nigeria will be demonstrated.

According to Tade Oluayo, Muhammed Buhari during the 2015 general election promised to fight,

> Corruption, defeat terrorism and fix the economy. However, Boko Haram terrorists continue to wreak havoc while bandits kidnap for ransom and herdsmen clash with farming communities, threatening food security and national unity. Unable to grow the economy, Nigerians are now poorer. Two years into the second term of Buhari's presidency, corruption remains intractable. However, issues like politicization of anti-corruption fight and the refusal to investigate accusations have cast doubt on the fight.[45]

Nigerians are frustrated by Buhari's claim of fighting corruption, because his double standard in the treatment of those loyal to him desires much to behold. His shielding his party members from been prosecuted is quite disheartening. The survey conducted by Transparency International in 2020 ranked Nigeria "149 in Transparency International's corruption perception index… Buhari government has described the rating as "senseless and baseless" The data on public encounters with corruption confirms that corruption remains a major problem."[46] Under Buhari's watch, it became prevailing that politically exposed people looted the treasury and adopted different mechanisms to hide their loot. Buhari's anti-corruption crusade made a very infinitesimal

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[45] Oludayo Tade, "Nigeria: The Buhari Administration's Failed Anti-Corruption Crusade," March 9, 2021, theAfrica report.com/70730/Nigeria-the buhari-administrations-failed-anti-corruption-crusade/.

[46] Transparency International the global coalition against corruption: transparency.org/en/cpi/2020

achievement by recovering some looted funds, and jailing some corrupt government officials. Where the anti-corruption crusade has not delivered any results, it's because of the government's failure to leave the fight against corruption to independent institutions. Doing so will separate genuine anti-corruption cases from politics.

Buhari's regime enthroned poverty, corruption, terrorism, tribalism, sectionalism and religious division. Nigerians under Buhari as a civilian head of state cried unceasingly because he destroyed meritocracy and enthroned mediocrity. He manifested that the problem with the country is not the system but the operators of the system. The same clique has ruled Nigeria either as civilians or military. The clique culture remains the same: unpatriotic. Nigeria needs a change of governance culture and leadership class. Under Buhari Nigerians did not enjoy the dividends of democracy. Buhari's regime was not all woes, he improved some of the state infrastructure. He also established an organ to fight corruption.

From the evaluation of all the regimes in Nigeria both military and civilian, it is obvious that corruption is the bane of Nigeria's socio-economic development. This is in spite of the various organs, and commissions of inquiry like; Federal Assets panel, Belgore commission of inquiry, Okigbo panel report, EFCC and ICPC, established by various regimes to combat corruption. Ogbeidi reports,

> Today, in Nigeria, there is a consensus among well-meaning individuals and foreign nations that corruption has inevitably become a major clog in the quest for sustainable growth and development. It is further agreed that it must be halted before it shuts down the country. It is the single most critical impediment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); and like a deadly virus, it attacks the vital structures and systems that engender progressive functioning of the society. Like most developing countries, Nigeria is still grappling with the dilemma of corruption that has largely retarded social development, undermined economic growth, discouraged foreign

> investments, and reduced the resources available for infrastructure development, public service, and poverty reduction programmes.[47]

The most irritating scourge of corruption is that it leaves the poor perpetually poor, disproportionately under-privileged; even it renders the development of democracy and the building of a society of opportunity more problematic.

Corruption thrived and flourished in Nigeria because of the ineptitude and unpardonable failure of the political leadership that has been managing the affairs and wealth of the country. They have brought unquantifiable agony to many voiceless and helpless Nigerians. The political leadership has indubitably and offensively pillaged the nation's commonwealth and national patrimony with impunity, thereby denying Nigerians access to economic prosperity and quality living condition. Ogbeidi exclaims,

> Indeed, it is difficult to think of any social ill in the country that is not traceable to the embezzlement and misappropriation of public funds, particularly as a direct or indirect consequence of the corruption perpetuated by the callous political leadership class since independence. The cycle of poverty keeps growing with all its attendant consequences, even as the rate of unemployment remains perpetually high.[48]

Political leadership in Nigeria has failed because those who were given the grace to become leaders lack integrity, ethical qualification, discipline and patriotism. The political leadership has plunged the country in a quagmire of a country too rich to be poor and at the same time too poor to be rich. Thus, this has made it inexorable for every Nigerian to be a victim of corruption. The most tragic effect of corruption on Nigeria has been the failure of the country to attain its economic potentials. Despite its substantial natural and human resources, Nigeria remains desperately poor due to bad management of its wealth by successive corrupts

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[47] Ogbeidi, "Political Leadership and Corruption in Nigeria," 18.
[48] Ogbeidi, "Political Leadership and Corruption in Nigeria," 19.

governments. Today, Nigeria is one of the poorest countries in the world. Invariably, some Nigeria lives in extreme poverty because of the corrupt practices of the political leadership class. The leadership formulates only laws that will be to their advantage, and cover up their scandalous corrupt practices. This sector, examined the various civilian regimes, how they tried to improve the socio-economic conditions of the people. It also showed that corruption is the main factor that impedes Nigeria's economic progress. Even though each administration seemingly tried to alleviate poverty, and fight corruption it appears they never gave sufficient and effective consideration.

2.5.5 Conclusion

This chapter gave a brief history of Nigeria. It offered vital information on Nigeria. It introduced the country as the basis of this case study, particularly its economy and poverty profile. It mentioned the various geo-political zones, and the states in each of them. It reviewed the various regimes military and democratic, how they handled poverty, and the various anti-poverty crusades they introduced. The following chapter will deal with literature review, and the causes of poverty in Nigeria.

Chapter Three: Literature Review and Conceptual Analysis of the Causes of Poverty in Nigeria

3.1 Introduction

Utilizing the accessible literature on poverty, this chapter explains how poverty has been perceived and comprehended right from time. It also demonstrates the various concepts of poverty across the authors, professionals and other organizations. Additionally, this chapter offers a general analysis of the causes of poverty. The objective of this analysis is to expose the persistent factors that have made poverty prevalent in Nigeria, and other African countries.

3.2 Literature Review

There is relatively copious literature addressing poverty in Nigeria. This chapter will explore using available literature especially recent ones how poverty has been perceived and understood both in the past and present. It evaluates the different perceptions of poverty by individual authors, institutions and international organizations. Specifically, this chapter is aimed at in depth knowledge of the conceptual analysis of poverty in Nigeria particularly and in Africa generally.

According to Garcia, Kohl, Ruengsorn, and Zislin, "Nigeria's main challenges are to reduce poverty, diversifying the economy away from crude oil and gas exports toward more labor-intensive sectors, and improve basic health and education for the poorest half of the population."[1] The oil has increased economic volatility and inflation, with those living in poverty being most vulnerable to volatility and inflation. To add to it, the instability of government

[1] Rose Mary Garcia, et al., *Nigeria: Economic Performance Assessment* (N.p.: Nathan Associates, 2006), 5.

revenues and a crowding out of agriculture (which provides the source of income to the poor) have made the situation worsen. The oil industry does not employ a sizeable number of unskilled workers, thereby contributing little to reducing poverty.[2] Neil Ford

> discusses the oil crisis in the oil producing region of Nigeria. He states that poverty has been linked to high crime rates, especially in the Niger Delta region where there is sharp contrast between the rich and the poor. The masses cause social unrest because the wealth gotten from their territory does not get to them. In the Nigerian society, the best way to acquire wealth is to enter the political sphere. Most of the time political success is tied to criminal activities. He concludes by stating that the link between economic and political power must be broken for progress to be made.[3]

The likes of Kwame Nkrumah, Rodney, and Onah perceive poverty in Nigeria as a result of colonialism. Nkrumah

> Explains that the obstacle to economic progress is a factor that instigates poverty in Nigeria. He observes that in 1962 petroleum products contributed 9.9 percent to Nigeria's exports, but it is shell BP that hopes to reap most of the benefits. The bulk of these exports were in crude oil, exceeding three million tons. The oil company is aiming at an export target of five million tons of crude oil by 1965. Processing plants are in Europe, not in Nigeria. The oil refinery going up in Port Harcourt is owned by Shell BP; the natural gas piping is owned by Shell-Barclays D.C. and O. The oil refinery is meant to handle only 10 percent of Nigeria's crude oil output, and its products will serve only Nigeria's domestic market. Such an arrangement makes it possible not to disturb operation outside Nigeria while making super profit on Nigerian operations.[4]

Rodney deliberates how colonialism heightened the impoverishment of Africa.

> He indicated that the massive loss to the African labor force was made more critical because it was composed of able-bodied young men and women. Slave buyers preferred their victims between the ages of fifteen and thirty five, and preferably in the early twenties, the sex ratio being about two men to one woman. Europeans often accepted younger African children, but rarely any older person.[5]

According to Onah,

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[2] Rose Mary Garcia et al., *Nigeria: Economic Performance Assessment*, 5.

[3] Neil Ford, "Pouring Oil on Delta's Troubled Waters? The Kidnappings and Violence in Nigeria's Main Oil Producing Region, the Delta, Remains a Running Sore in the Country's Body Politic. New President, Umaru Yar'Adua, Has Called for Talks to Try and End the Stalemate. Will He Succeed?" *African Business*, August 1, 2007, https://www.thefreelibrary.com/_/print/PrintArticle.aspx?id=168180874.

[4] Kwame Nkrumah, *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (London: Panaf Books, 1965), 35.

[5] Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 15.

> Nigeria gained her independence on October 1st 1960. The years of colonialism brought some set back in Nigeria. The colonial masters built and structured Nigerian economy to facilitate the expropriation of her resources for British economic growth and development, thereby leaving Nigeria with poverty and dependency…The resources for local industries that should have been used to empower the citizenry through employment opportunities are now wasted overseas. Globalization and the world trade organization: Liberalization policies have been noted as modern day colonialism causing poverty of the third world countries. Some writers and scholars have suggested that Nigeria should boycott the WTO agreement because the treaty leads to goods being dumped in the country, leading to the closure of local industries. This will increase the unemployment and the poverty level of Nigerian citizens as they depend on imports and proceeds from the nation's oil for their survival. Prejudice and nepotism: These affect peoples' ability to secure employment and earn a living. Entrenched tribal prejudices and nepotism sometimes determine a person's chances of securing employment in Nigeria. The issue of "state of origin" as prerequisite for securing employment in the states and local government areas in Nigeria is a case in point. Often, those who relocate to states other than their own state of origin are being treated as non-indigenes.[6]

Another school of thought, according to Olatomide Waheed Olowa, recognizes poverty as the "outcome of inefficient use of common resources. This may result from weak policy, environment, inadequate infrastructure, weak access to technology, credit etc. Also, it can be due to certain groups using certain mechanisms in the system to exclude other groups from participating in economic development, including the democratic process."[7] In lieu of this, Okonja Iweala discusses the

> lack of infrastructure in Nigeria as a challenge that exacerbates poverty in Nigeria. She attests, without improvements in infrastructure, Nigeria's economy will not be able to produce the job-creating growth that is needed. In particular, small and medium-size enterprises will not be able to grow as infrastructure costs and bottlenecks make it difficult for them to be competitive. In addition, she held that the goal for reforming the power sector should be modest and creative. They should address the basic services-delivery needs both households and businesses. It is far more important to look towards improvements in power generation, transmission, and distribution and seek creative means to achieve these than to promise a doubling or tripling of the current 4,000-megawatt capacity in the medium term and not achieve it.[8]

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[6] F. O. Onah, *Managing Public Programs and Projects* (Nsukka, Nigeria: Great AP Express Publishers, 2006), 45.

[7] Olatomide Waheed Olowa, "Concept, Measurement and Causes of Poverty: Nigeria in Perspective," *American Journal of Economics* 2, no. 1 (2012): 25-36, https://doi.org/10.5923/j.economics.20120201.04.

[8] Okonja N. Iweala, *Reforming the Unreformable: Lessons from Nigeria* (London: MIT Press, 2014), 25.

Hussani Mustapha on the one hand analyses the various interventionist programs in Nigeria aimed at alleviating poverty, and, while they failed,

> He makes a distinction of the programs during the pre-sap, sap/post-sap eras. He articulates that the policies of the pre-sap eras, describes essentially ad hoc, included Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), Free and compulsory Primary Education (FCPE), Green Revolution, Low Cost Housing, River Basin Development Authorities (RBDA), National Agricultural Land Development Program (ADP), Agriculture Credit Guarantee Scheme Strategic Grains Reserves Program (SGRP), and Rural Electrification Scheme (RES) , and Rural Banking Program (RBP) Most of these programs were designed to take care of such objectives as employment generation, enhancing agricultural output and income, and stemming the tide of rural-urban migration, which no doubt affected poverty reduction. Despite some significant degree of success made by some of these programs, most of them could not be sustained. In fact, with time, many of them failed as a result of diversion from original focus. The SAP ERA: conscious policy effort by government towards poverty alleviation began in Nigeria during the era Structural Adjustment Program (SAP), the severe economic crisis in Nigeria in the early 1980s worsened the quality of life of most Nigerians. The government made a determined effort to check the crisis through the adoption of SAP. However, the implementation of SAP further worsened the living conditions of many Nigerians especially the poor who were the most vulnerable group. This made the government to design and implement many poverty alleviation programs between 1986 and 1993. Also, under the guided deregulation that spanned the period 1993-1998, more poverty reduction programs were put in place by government. These programs Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), National Directorate of Employment (NDE), Better Life Program (BLP), People's Bank of Nigeria (PBN), Community Banks Program, Family Support Programs (FSP) and Family Economic Advancement Program (FEAP), nonetheless, most of these poverty alleviation programs suffered the same fate as a recent government assessment showed. It found that they all failed due largely to the fact that: They were mostly designed not to alleviate poverty. They lacked a clear defined policy framework with proper guidelines for poverty alleviation. They suffered from polity instability, political interference, policy and macroeconomic dislocations. They also lacked continuity. They are in most cases poorly implemented. They are characterized by corruption on the part of government officials and public servants.[9]

Poverty is also due to corruption and poor leadership. Chimobi Ucha portrays

> the abuse of entrusted power for private gain as a factor. He reports that this has become a common act in Nigeria and it has destabilized the political system drastically. Government funds are being misappropriated on a daily basis by the leaders, who only

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[9] Hussani Mustapha, "Poverty Alleviation Programs in Nigeria: Issues and Challenges," *International Journal of Development Research* 4, no. 3 (2014): 717-720.

> put interest of their family and friends at heart while ignoring the masses. The corruption has eaten deeply into the government and economy that everyone seems to be blinded by it. Corruption has almost become an accepted way of life in Nigeria. Furthermore, he mentions that the non-diversification of the economy as another factor. He alluded that while Nigeria's poverty has been identified to be caused by many factors, Nigeria's non-diversification of the economy can be seen as a major factor. Before 1970, the Nigerian economy was driven by agricultural sector. The oil sector which only constituted 1 percent of the country's revenue in 1958 rose to 97% by 1984 and has since then not gone below 90%. In 2008, the oil and gas sector constituted about 97.5% of their export revenues, 81% of government revenues and about17 percent of GDP.[10]

Chinua Achebe associates poverty in Nigeria with poor leadership. He insists that the trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. "There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian character. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land, climate, water, air, or anything else. The Nigeria problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to their responsibility, to the challenge of personal example, which is the hallmark of true leadership."[11]

Contributing to how poor leadership and bad governance stimulate poverty Adjei, establishes that

> many African countries are faced with a crisis in leadership and governance. The leaders of most African countries engage themselves in politics to satisfy their personal needs (politics of the belly) and fulfill the wishes of their relatives (nepotism). Their focus is amassing wealth while in power and thus very little attention is given to state institutions that are relevant in building up economies of African countries and making them sustainable. These institutions include those that can perform checks and balances on the operations of government officials and due to weak nature, much corruption goes on in the system without being addressed and dealt with. There are many policies and programs designed by African countries to deal with corruption. However their implementation has become problematic due to the inability of institutions to do so or lack of political will. Through corruption, large volumes of state resources are lost to public officials further causing wide inequality between state officials and the average citizen.[12]

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[10] Chimobi Ucha, "Poverty in Nigeria: Some Dimensions and Contributing Factors," *Global Majority E-Journal* 1, no. 1 (June 2010): 46-56.

[11] Chinua Achebe, *The Trouble with Nigeria* (Oxford: Heinemann Educational Publishers, 1984), 3.

[12] Maxwell Adjei, "Poverty in Africa: Causes, Solutions and the Future," Academia.edu, 2017, 1-51. https://www.academia.edu/36760137/POVERTY_IN_AFRICA_CAUSES_SOLUTIONS_AND_THE_FUTURE.

Ogbeidi remarks,

> It is a paradox that Nigeria, the world's eighth largest exporter of crude oil, a country endowed with many resources, still has more than 70 percent of its population living below the poverty line as a result of corruption and economic mismanagement. Pathetically, the logic of the Nigerian political leadership class has been that of self-service as some of the leaders are mired in the pursuit of selfish and personal goals at the expense of broader national interests. Consequently, emphasis has been on personal aggrandizement and self-glorification with the result that corruption has become a euphemism for explaining political leadership in Nigeria in relation to management of national wealth.[13]

Poverty in Nigeria is also attributed to encroachment of other nationals on Nigeria marine life. Gbadamosi, narrates how

> Nigerian fishers hit by criminals, stipulates that coastal nation is marine rich but over half of the fish served there are imported from countries like Netherlands, and increasingly from China. At a time when growing evidence suggests warming waters are pushing fish further from the West African coast, the fishing grounds of developing nations like Nigeria are today some of Asia's and EU's most targeted. Lack of investment in the local fishing industry has compounded the problem. He further reported, "The department of fisheries cannot engage in pursuit because they do not own (an effective) patrol vessel…Their vessels have a range of no more than 200 nautical miles. The navy is trying but their vessels are derelict…Then you find corrupt personnel taking backhanders to let certain things slide. This includes fishing with finer-mesh nets to catch more fish."[14]

Okonja Iweala observes,

> Corruption is dangerous to fight in Nigeria, and how it stimulates poverty. She indicates that Nigeria is one of the difficult and complex countries where corrupt people often adopt a language of reform to confuse decision makers, donors, development experts, and observers. The pension arena was fraught with this type of deception, which delayed the reform of the system. She argues that citizens of developed countries are no more honest or corrupt than those of developing countries. They also have the same social networks of family, schools, and club affiliations that can tempt them to engage in corrupt or opaque behavior. After all, the term "old boy" network was coined in Britain. The difference is that developed countries have built strong institutions that help prevent corruption and that apprehend and punish transgressors. In Nigeria, several systems –the government integrated Financial Management Information System (GIFMIS), Integrated Personnel

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[13] Ogbeidi, "Political Leadership and Corruption in Nigeria," 3.

[14] Nosmot Gbadamosi, "Nigerian Fishers Hit by Criminals, Imports and Climate Change," *China Dialogue Ocean*, May 31, 2019, https://chinadialogueocean.net/en/fisheries/8338-nigeria-fishers-criminals-imports-climate-change/.

> and Payroll Management System (IPPIS), and treasury Single Account (TSA) built for the federal financial system with assistance of World Bank, the United Kingdom 's Department for International Development (DFID), are good examples of institutions that limits or stems corruption. These institutions need to be extended to state and local government levels where impunity is prevalent. To successfully fight corruption in Nigeria, there is much to be done to strengthen federal, state and local government institutions, including the judicial and legislative branches.[15]

Chinua Achebe again discloses how mediocrity intensifies poverty. He explains,

> What has consistently escaped most Nigerians in this entire travesty is the fact that mediocrity destroys the very fabric of a country as surely as a war –ushering in all sorts of banality, ineptitude, corruption, and debauchery. Nations enshrine mediocrity as their modus operandi, and create fertile ground for the rise of tyrants and other base elements of the society, by silently assenting to the dismantling of systems of excellence because they do not immediately benefit one specific ethnic, racial, political, or special interest group. That, in my humble opinion, is where Nigeria finds itself today.[16]

Poverty in Nigeria could also be a result of climate change. Ned Helme engages how climate change will increase poverty in Africa. He states,

> Africa by virtue of its size, population, and poverty may prove to be ground zero in a warming world. According to IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report, in some African countries, agricultural yields could drop as much as 50% by 2020-further impoverishing small scale farmers and jeopardizing the continent's food security. Already, roughly a quarter of Africa's population is under high water stress; by 2020, the population at risk is projected to be 75 to 250 million people.[17]

The legal system of Nigeria is another factor that predisposes Nigeria to poverty. Onyekakeya remarks,

> Nigeria's most crucial challenge is weak legal system. He narrates that there would be no effective battle against corruption as long as the judicial system is unprepared for such battle. The criminal code, probably, did not envisage the kind of corruption we have

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[15] Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, *Fighting Corruption is Dangerous: The Story Behind the Headlines* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2018), 35.

[16] Chinua Achebe, *There Was a Country: A Personal History of Biafra* (New York: Penguin Press, 2012), 100.

[17] Ned Helme, "Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Efforts in China: Progress and Opportunities," in *Climate Change and Global Poverty: A Billion Lives in the Balance?*, ed. Lael Brainard, Abigail Jones, and Nigel Purvis (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2009), 85. https://archive.org/details/climatechangeglo0000unse/page/n5/mode/2up.

> already, hence the system is unprepared. Granted that the EFCC Act, which is relatively new, empowers the anti-graft body to investigate and arrest suspects but the judiciary has not been re-tuned to match with the new system. That is why there are many corruption cases pending in courts without prompt adjudication. The way out is to create special courts to deal with corruption cases separately.[18]

According to Nnadi, to discuss poverty in Nigeria, globalization should be mentioned. He discusses the various impacts of globalization on the Nigerian economy.

> The impacts have resulted to social and economic problems in the country such as inequality, the emergency of a social underclass and low development. He notes that "globalization has effected Nigeria's economic growth through decline of foreign direct investment and that for unemployment; poverty and inequality to be alleviated Nigeria's economic policies need to be changed."[19]

On the same token Moyo, analyzes the aftermath of poverty explains that life expectancy has stagnated. She reiterates,

> Africa is the only continent where life expectancy is less than sixty years; today it hovers around fifty years, and in some countries it has fallen back to what it was in the 1950s. The decrease in life expectancy is mainly attributed to the rise of HIV-AIDS pandemic. … Adult literacy across most African countries has plummeted below pre-1980 levels. Literacy rates, health indicators (Malaria, water borne diseases such as bilharzia and cholera) and income inequality all remain a cause for poverty.[20]

Obasanjo, perceiving corruption as one of the root causes of poverty in Nigeria, wants the church to help to fight corruption. He opined,

> There is no doubt that all our institutions have been tarnished by the brush of corruption. If the church, as an institution, does not take bribe or get involved in other corrupt practice, the behavior of some of our men of God leaves much to be desired. They not only celebrate but venerate those whose sources of wealth are questionable. They accept gifts (offerings) from just anybody without asking questions. This gives the impression that anything is acceptable in the house of God. But if Jesus can chase out those buying and selling from the temple with the declaration, "My house shall be called the house of

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[18] Luke Onyekakeya, "Why Corruption Persists in Nigeria," *The Guardian*, November 27, 2018, https://guardian.ng/opinion/why-corruption-persists-in-nigeria/.

[19] Stanley E. Nnadi, "The Impact of Globalization on the Nigerian Economy" (PhD diss., Walden University, 2008), 45.

[20] Dambisa Moyo, *Dead Aid: Why Aid Is Not Working and How There Is a Better Way for Africa* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009), 54.

> prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves" (Matthew 21: 12-13), then it is time to stand up against corruption.
>
> The church needs to clear its Augean Stable. The temple of God must be cleanest to restore the holiness of the church. Our present day 'money changers' and merchants must be chased out of the church and put to shame in the larger society. … The pulpit must be used to teach and preach the right values. One of our major problems is the breakdown of value system. The church, as agent of socialization, must be in the forefront of rebuilding our value system and making the individual imbibe these values and moral principles. The church must boldly speak out against corruption in our society. The church must take to the high moral ground and speak out against corrupt leadership and poor governance. The above literature review will assist in analyzing causes of poverty, impact of poverty and possible things that can be done to alleviate poverty in Nigeria.[21]

3.2.1 Conceptual Analysis of Poverty

The cause of poverty in Nigeria cannot be attributed to one factor alone. Poverty as one of the greatest problems known to mankind brings more harm than good to those who are its unlucky captive. Poverty is not limited to the lack of money to acquire the essential and basic necessities of life. It implies also being financially, mentally, socially, economically and politically handicapped as a poor person is like an immobile vehicle that can only come to life when the necessary things to put it in motion has been done. It is because of this, that this unit will examine political, economic, cultural, religious and environmental factors as the cause poverty in Nigeria.

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[21] Olusegun Obasanjo, "The Role of the Church in the Fight against Corruption in Nigeria," *Premium Times Opinion*, April 8, 2017, https://opinion.premiumtimesng.com/2017/04/08/the-role-of-the-church-in-the-fight-against-corruption-in-nigeria-by-olusegun-obasanjo/?tztc=1.

3.2.2 Political Factors

Politically, Nigeria has not advanced as expected. While Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, with huge man power and natural resources, it has not done so well. It has been expected the country would have progressed politically and economically beyond where it is currently because of the advantages it has. It is disheartening, that functional politicians have not created enabling environment for improvement. They have instituted corruption that it becomes difficult for the country to advance. This is why political factor as a very crucial point would be considered in this subheading. Political factors to be evaluated include neo-colonialism, foreign aids, corruption, poor leadership, and political instability.

Neo-colonialism: When Nigeria and some other African countries gained their independence in the 60s, many thought colonialism has come to an end. The joy and celebration of sovereignty was ephemeral because the colonial masters staged a comeback in the form of neo-colonialism, which became worse than colonialism. Currently, not only the colonizers are involved in neo-colonialism some other Asian countries like China has joined in the race to exploit and oppress African especially Nigeria. It is because of this that neo-colonialism will be studied as a principal factor causing poverty in Nigeria. Neo-colonialism has contributed immensely to poverty in Nigeria. It has affected Nigeria in several negative ways. It is a major obstacle to the process of nation-building. Neo-colonialism is not a physical colonialism but still controlling. According to Durodola Samuel Tosin,

> The imperialist maintained presence in the economies of former colonies, its governance to maintain the flow of raw materials and prices under the conditions which benefitted the developed countries. From all indications the independence granted did not necessarily

> mean the end of all political and economic dependence in foreign trade and direct investment. There were still so many constrains on African sovereignty.[22]

In effect, the colonizers are still controlling the colonized especially economically and politically. The control entails exploitation, marginalization, and subjugation. The colonizer declared independence for the colonized only on paper but practically they detected what happens in the colonized countries. This unfortunate condition besieged Africa, and has hindered Africa countries especially Nigeria from economic development. Imperialism laid the initial stage for the domination of African continent by the European powers. This facilitated the colonizer to invade the colonized without any formal or legal right.

According to the theoretical frame work of this research, the subjugation, exploitation, domination, and poverty in African especially Nigeria is enhanced by colonial thinking. The colonizers infused on the colonized to loath everything about Africa. To perceive everything about Africa as ugly, barbaric and untenable. Africans were taught to reject even their language and culture. They were encouraged to hate their fellow Africans. The colonized were forced to believe that they were inferior to the colonizers. This type of thinking has kept the colonized undeveloped and poor. Emmanuel Lartey comments,

> After more than 400 years of slave trading, colonial exploitation, cultural and economic and postcolonial political manipulation much of Africa is a wasteland of woes and war. The Africa peoples everywhere have been taught to be self-loathing, to see everything about Africa as negative. Taught to believe that Africa is definition of failure and ugliness. The time has come to put an end to the negative and begin the positive. The time has come for us to till our own vineyard; to produce inner and outer wealth for ourselves. The time has come for us to stand and state, "I am a proud African, proud of

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[22] Samuel T. Durodola, "Neo-colonialism: A Major Obstacle to the Process of Nation-Building in Africa," Academia.edu, accessed February 2, 2024, 1, academia.edu/27227588/NEO_COLONIALISM_A_MAJOR_OBSTACLE_TO_THE_PROCESS_OF_NATION BUILDING_IN_AFRICA.

> my land, proud of my people, committed to making the third millennium the African millennium."[23]

This singular mentality has caused Nigeria, and other African countries their liberation, self-worth and human dignity. This forces the colonized to be dependent on the colonizers as if the colonized has no consciousness, identity, and ingenuity. The dependence of the colonized on the colonizers escalated the colonizers' oppression and exploitation of the colonized. The aftermath is poverty, economic regression, unemployement, hunger, disease and decayed infrastructure in the land of the colonized. That is why this research advocates decolonization to empower and instigate the colonized to willfully and consciously resist all unjust social, economic and political structure that cause pain, poverty and marginalization. The absolute rejection of the colonizers pseudo history will stimulate the colonized to discover the evil machination, and injustice of the colonizers. The discovery will assist the colonized to halt and smash colonialism and neocolonialism.

The Berlin conference of 1884-1885 which encouraged the scramble and partition of Africa is a watershed in the balkanization of Africa. This expedited European expansionism towards fostering their economic and trading interest rather than the industrialization and progress of Africa. Thomas Pakenham explains,

> The partition of Africa was as well all recognize, due primarily to the economic necessity of increasing the supplies of raw materials and food to meet the needs of the industrialized nations of Europe…For two or three generations, we can show the Negro what we are: Then we shall be asked to go away. Then we shall leave the land to those it belongs to, with the feeling that they have better business friends in us than in other whitemen.[24]

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[23] Emmanuel Lartey, *Postcolonializing God*, 40.
[24] Thomas Pakenham, *The Scramble for Africa, 1876-1912* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1991), 85.

Evidently, the intention of the imperialist is the market to sell their finished products that motivated them to explore and exploit Africa as a continent fertile to sell their products. Added to that is sourcing raw materials to expand their various industries. On the one hand, they used the profit realized for the growth of their economy to transform their continent. They never thought it wise to use part of the profit to transform the continent of the colonized they only depleted the resources of the colonized. Before evaluating how the imperialists contributed to destitution in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular the notion of neo-colonialism will be explored.

Neo-colonialism is a concept that has been subjected to various definitions. It is based on domination, oppression, exploitation and subordination. Neo-colonialism cannot be separated from the objectives of European domination and the study of the colonial state in Africa. Jadesola Babatola opines,

> Neo-colonialism is prevalent in Africa unlike other continents and it can be described as an advanced stage of colonialism because it exists in forms of the cultural, educational, industrial and technological subjugation of a former colonial territory and the further economic domination of the independent state by the former colonizer in the absence of an institutionalised political structure and direct military presence for the physical control and direction of the state ideology and economy by a superior power or former colonizer over her former and liberated colonies.[25]

Neo-colonialism exists in all ramifications in Nigeria particularly and Africa as a whole. It is easily perceived in the lives and land of the colonized. The implication is that the colonizer is still ruling and controlling the colonized.

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[25] Jadesola E. T. Babatola, "Neo-colonialism in Africa: A Perpetuation of Western Interest and Subjugation of Africa," Academia.edu, accessed February 2, 2024, 2, academia.edu/20147006/NEO_Colonialism_in_Africa_A_Perpetuation_of_Western_Interest and Subjugation of Africa.

In line with this, the All-African Peoples' Conference defined neo-colonialism as "the survival of the colonial system in spite of formal recognition of political independence in emerging countries which become the victims of an indirect and subtle form of domination by political, economic, social, military or technical means."[26] It is apparent that neo-colonialism is another form of colonization. The subjugation of the colonized is foremost the core and primary concern of the colonizer. The colonizers consider themselves as superior and the occupied as inferior. Because the colonizers felt superior, they imposed their will on the colonized. Following this, Kwame Nkrumah indicates neo-colonialism as "the worst form of imperialism "he adds that "it means exploitation without redress."[27] Instead of economic, social and economic liberation of the colonized, neo-colonialism becomes a form of expansionism. The colonizers continue to infringe on the freedom of the colonized. The colonizers take what belongs to the colonized without negotiation, or seeking the consent of the colonized. In his own words, Durodola explains that neo-colonialism is "the undue subjection of former colonies and dependencies to a new form of colonialism after the independence movement of the post-World War I period. Africa countries are independent in name and remained pawns of the colonial powers which were supposed to have given them independence."[28]

Neo-colonialism involves suppression, domination, conquest, and subjugation. It means that the colonized has been ever conquered. The colonizers pillage the colonized with impunity, and carelessly. The colonized is rendered voiceless in his own country. The land of the

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[26] All-African Peoples' Conference, "Resolution on Neocolonialism," March 25–31, 1961, quoted in Editors, The Black Agenda Review, "Document: Resolution on Neocolonialism, Cairo, 1961," Black Agenda Report, February 2, 2022, https://www.blackagendareport.com/document-resolution-neocolonialism-cairo-1961.

[27] Nkrumah, *Neo-colonialism*, 31.

[28] Durodola, "Neo-colonialism: A Major Obstacle," 1.

colonized is taken by the colonizers. The colonizers oppress the colonized regardless of their humanity. In effect, neo-colonialism experiences cannot be divorced from the goals of European imperialism. To embellish neo-colonialism, the Atlantic slave trade becomes pertinent.

The Atlantic slave trade cannot be neglected when discussing how neo-colonialism hampered the progress of Nigeria, and African as a whole. Rodney laments,

> To discuss trade between Africans and Europeans in the four centuries before colonial rule is virtually to discuss slave trade. Strictly speaking, the African only became a slave when he reached a society where he worked as a slave. Before that he was first a free man and then a captive. Nevertheless, it is acceptable to speak of the trade in slaves when referring to the shipment of captives from Africa to various other parts of the world where they were to live and work as the property of Europeans.[29]

Essentially, Africans were captured by Europeans, sold, transported or shipped to the New World. The colonizers exchanged raw materials and African slaves for manufactured goods. On reaching America, they were re-sold, and stripped of their humanity. They became chattel property of the slave masters. It is quite disheartening that the system by which slaves were acquired from Africa is not in any way civil, and cannot be described as exchange or trade. Rodney comments, "It is also true that very often a captive was sold and resold as he made his way from the interior to the port of embarkation –and that too was a form of trade. However, on the whole the process by which captives were obtained on African soil was not trade at all. It was through warfare, trickery, banditry, and kidnapping."[30] The way the slaves were obtained indicates that the goal of slavery is destructive. The slaves were not considered nor treated like rational beings. They were perceived as expendable and disposable. They are of little significance, inconsequential, can be destroyed and abandoned anytime.

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[29] Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 95.
[30] Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 95.

It is uncertain how many slaves reached the New World, and how many died in the ship. It is speculated that thousands of African reached the new world and other designated places alive, and many more died in the ship. Rodney attests,

> One of the uncertainties concerns the basic question of how many Africans were imported. This has long been an object of speculation, with estimates ranging from a few millions to over one hundred million. A recent study has suggested a figure of about ten million Africans landed alive in the Americas, the Atlantic Islands, and Europe. Because it is a low figure, it is already being used by European scholars who are apologists for the capital system and its long record of brutality in Europe and abroad. In order to whitewash the European slave trade, they find it convenient to start minimizing the numbers concerned.[31]

This is one of the egregious tragedies of the Atlantic slave trade the number of those that reached alive is unknown, the number that died is uncertain. The number that was killed during the raid cannot be accounted for. The names, tribes, gender, age and countries of the slaves were not preserved. Why they were given new and foreign names at the point of entry is agonizing, incomprehensible and the underestimation of African culture.

The loss of identity has continued to hunt Afro- Americans, and those living elsewhere. If the original record was kept, it has not been made accessible to researchers. Rodney corroborates,

> On any basic figure of Africans landed alive in the Americas, one would have to make several extensions-starting with a calculation to cover mortality in transshipment. The Atlantic crossing, or "Middle passage" as it was called by European slavers, was notorious for the number of deaths incurred, averaging in the vicinity of 15to 20 percent. There were also numerous deaths in Africa between the time of capture and the time of embarkation, especially in cases where captives have to travel hundreds of miles to the coast. Mostly important of all (given that warfare was the principal means of obtaining captives) it is necessary to make some estimate as to the number of people killed and injured so as to extract the millions who were taken alive and sound.[32]

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[31] Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 96.
[32] Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 96.

The inhuman treatment was so excruciating. Blacks were stripped of their humanity, dignity, culture, identity and self-esteem. It is left to providence if ever they will recover from this trauma.

The huge loss of able-bodied humans beings by the colonized has left an unimaginable, and unquantifiable vacuum in the economic, socially, and political life of African as a continent and Nigeria as a country, and has inspired poverty in Nigeria. Rodney comments,

> The massive loss to the African labor force was made more critical because it was composed of able-bodied young men and young women. Slave buyers preferred their victims between the ages of fifteen and thirty five, and preferably in the early twenties; the sex ratio being about two men to one woman. Europeans often accepted younger African children, but rarely any older person. They shipped the most healthy wherever possible, taking the trouble to get those who had already survived an attack of smallpox, and who were therefore immune from further attacks of that disease, which was then one of the world's great killer diseases.[33]

Population plays an important role to development anywhere. It helps in the economic and social growth of the country. The colonizer is absolutely against child labor, but child labor was permitted and allowed in the case of the colonized, where then is justice? In the case of Africa, because those sold were mostly able-bodied young men, and women that minimized the labor force of the continent of Africa and Nigeria as a country. Invariably, the economic activity of the colonized was reduced because their youth were taken as captives to America, Europe and other parts of the world. The appalling and horrible long history of slave trade, that lasted about four hundred years assisted immensely to hinder the progress of the colonized. The effect of slave trade on the continent of Africa is very deep and cannot be easily forgotten.

Furthermore, neo-colonialism contributed to poverty in Nigeria by reduction of Africa into cheap suppliers of raw materials, and cheap labor in the service of the world capitalist profit

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[33] Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 97.

without having any power in fixing prices. Durodola narrates, "The developed countries of the world import raw materials and resources from Africa at their own desired price and export finished goods to Africa at a higher rate. This has created unfavorable balance and has increasingly reduced the chances of development and national integration in Africa."[34] This happens because African countries and more so Nigeria are placed in a precarious situation in the international economic system after the incorporation of their economy into global capitalist system by their former colonial masters. They have been placed at a disadvantaged position and the role and allocation of resources have been unequal compared to the developed countries.

On the same token, neo-colonialism has hindered nation building in Nigeria through credit Aid investment, and foreign trade. This credit aid investment was designed to strengthen not only Nigeria but other African countries, but unfortunately, the loan granted and the attached collateral made Nigeria and other African countries to still depend on the imperialist. Foreign aid direct investment depreciates the economy, and the continued colonial control militates against a sustainable economic growth. Lee Wengraf argues,

> Decades of loans and structural adjustment policies from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank –often referred to as the Bretton Woods institutions … have placed an economic stranglehold on Africa and other Third World nations. US capital drove the establishment of World Bank and the IMF. Using the IMF and World Bank as a battering ram, the neoliberal policy of trade liberalization forced its way across Africa and the rest of the globe, leaving in its wake decimated social programs, a debt crisis, and low wages-that is, conditions favorable for US investment.[35]

The imperialists created these institutions for their own benefit and advantage. The institutions are another means of exploiting the colonized. The colonized are meant to owe all the time, and

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[34] Durodola, "Neo-colonialism: A Major Obstacle," 1.

[35] Lee Wengraf, *Extracting Profit: Imperialism, Neoliberalism, and the New Scramble for Africa* (Chicago: Haymarket Books, 2018), 33.

even mortgage the future of their countries. The colonized only do things the imperialist wants them to do. The colonized, is a mere robot being pushed around by the colonizer. Invariably, the colonizer practically determines and controls almost everything about the colonized. The repercussion is that colonization of Nigeria, and Africa as a whole was designed to aid the survival and extension of capitalism. This is done through the development, the strengthening of her industrial complex, and markets.

Poverty in Nigeria is rooted in the relations between industrialized nations of the world and Africa. The relation is based on economic exploitation. Neo-colonialism, exploits third world nations through comprador bourgeoisie. These are persons the imperialists left behind who act as agents for foreign organizations engaged in investment, trade, economic or political exploitation. Wengraf illuminates,

> The forces underlying African poverty are far from reducible to problems of "corruption" and "governance," but rather are rooted in historic relationships of exploitation of a larger capitalist system, wherein political and economic strategies on the part of the west came to the fore and were advanced at key moments. To sketch out this period here, broadly speaking, the thwarting of industrial development in conditions created under colonialism, the national-development models of African ruling classes attempted after independence, the narrowing of those horizons into single-commodity export economies, and World Bank/IMF-imposed austerity have all combined to produce debt crisis, collapse of infrastructure, poverty, lack of access to health care, high rates of HIV/AIDS, low wages, low literacy rates, an explosion of urban slums, and a host of other poor grades on human development "indicator."[36]

This crippling poverty instigated by the ill-treatment of the colonizers on the colonized as noted above resulted in crisis of health care that has reached epidemic proportion in Nigeria, and Africa as a whole, the average life expectancy is nothing to write home about, some people have no access to any form of sanitation facilities, and infant mortality is alarming. Neo-colonialism

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[36] Wengrat, *Extracting Profit*, 35.

therefore perpetuated an imbalance in relationship between a former colonizer and her liberated colonies by providing a superstructure with irresistible economic relations and potentials to further exploit and extract the economic resources of the latter largely through provision of capital, accumulation of profit and expansion of her home economy from the exploitative gains. Neo-colonialism has caused incessant coup d'etat and political incursions in Nigeria and other parts of African which has impeded the process of nation building. In some parts of Africa, government that do not share the political or economic views of their former masters or developed countries have either been removed by coup d'etat, assassination, civil incursions, violent campaigns and so on. Rodney maintains,

> Political instability is manifesting itself in Africa as a chronic symptom of the underdevelopment of political life within the imperialist context. Military coups have followed one after the other, usually meaning nothing to the mass of the people, and sometimes representing a reactionary reversal of the efforts at national liberation. This trend was well exemplified in Latin American history, so that its appearance in neo-colonial…Africa is not at all surprising. If economic power is centered outside national African boundaries, then political and military in any real sense is also centered outside until, and unless, the masses of peasants and workers are mobilized to offer an alternative to the system of sham political independence.[37]

The colonizer uses every means available to hinder the progress of the colonized. The imperialist does not want any opposition from the colonized hence the frequent coups in Africa. Any colonized leader that resists the colonizer is automatically removed from power in the shortest possible time. Economic and political interests are all that mattered to the colonizers. The welfare of the colonized is secondary, and is given infinitesimal consideration. The colonized has no freedom even after the proclamation of independence.

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[37] Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 27.

In addition to sponsoring coups in Africa, neo-colonialism has hampered the progress of nation development in Nigeria as a result of technological gap. There has been the problem of increasing number of expatriates in Nigeria. This eventually led to the increase in military budgets inspired by importation of military hard-wares and personnel. Currently, Nigeria and likewise some other African countries continue to have the problem of brain drainage. Some African states continue to witness the increasing migration of qualified workers abroad due to the technological gap and economic gap between African states and Europe. Rodney affirms,

> It takes a large number of skilled people to make an industrial economy function…To make matters worse, there is at present a "brain drain" from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and western Europe. This is to say, professionals, technicians, high-level administrators, and skilled workers emigrate from their homes, and the small number of skilled people available to the underdeveloped world is further depleted by the lure of better pay and opportunities in the developed world.[38]

These economic and technological gaps encouraged by neo-colonialism has continued to make it very difficult for Nigeria to advance. The best personnel of the colonized in all fields of endeavors are lured to the land of colonizers. The countries of the colonizers steadily improve, and Nigeria and other African continue to retrogress.

Neo-colonialism, stimulating poverty in Nigeria is not only caused by the colonialists executing bloody coups in Africa and technological gap alone. It is also manifested by military presence. The military presence is to foster imperialism in the land of the colonized like Nigeria. The military is in the territory of the colonized primarily to overseer, and control the resources of the colonized. Lee Wengraf accentuates, "From the era of the "original" scramble for Africa of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these imperial "antagonisms" have spilled over

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[38] Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, 28.

onto the continent through colonial competition for territory and natural resources."[39] The competition by the colonizers for natural resources in the land of colonized is causing more harm than good. It stimulates unhealthy rivalry among the colonizers, and heightens capitalism. The colonizers only protect the interest of their countries, and leave the colonized to languish in poverty. The US is leading in this expansionism, and is making unquantifiable profit from it. Wengraf espouses,

> This dynamic has accentuated the race to control access to resources and markets, heightening the potential for armed conflict. In the post-9/11 era, the "war on terror" has become the umbrella under which the United States has massively expanded its military presence across Africa, most notably with the launch, in 2007, of its new US military command, AFRICOM. The United States has also advocated for a heightened multilateral presence: by the mid-2010s, over 100,000 "peacekeepers" were deployed across the continent serving on a range of missions, with Africa hosting nearly 80 percent of all UN troops. The rapid build-up of this infrastructure –and the widening of the wars in the neighboring Middle East and Gulf –has deepened imperial involvement and instability, rendering Africa a more dangerous place overall."[40]

The land of the imperialist is safe, but they make the land of the colonized is unsafe. The tension the colonizers create in the land of the colonized is to enable them have uncontrollable access to the resource of the colonized. The colonizers sleep and wake up peacefully, but the colonized do not because their land is made unsafe by the colonialist.

This inordinate exploitation and domination has left the colonized absolutely poor. This poverty is shown in the infrastructural decay in the land of the colonized. For instance, the colonized can be without water, but its territory is awash with ammunition. Indubitably, the colonized will benefit more from the water than from ammunition, why the colonizers prefer

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[39] Wengraf, *Extracting Profit*, 195.
[40] Wengraf, *Extracting Profit*, 196.

ammunition to water is overt; their interest is economic gain and not the welfare of the colonized. Using whatsoever pretext to enhance military presence in the land of the colonized is unprofitable, and has enduring negative effects on the colonized. Wengraf declares,

> Today's civil wars are the direct descendants of colonial powers, and later the United States and USSR, creating and fuelling conflict through the divisions and boundaries they carved out and the rulers they supported…Meanwhile, civil wars and counterinsurgencies produced devastation on a massive scale, with deaths in the millions over this period from violence, famines, and displacement…the roots of wars today lie in the historical competition between imperial powers over strategic resources and political allegiance.[41]

Military presence only serves the master. It offers the colonizers the opportunity to expand their imperial power, and territory. It leaves deep agony, and inflicts untold hardship on the colonized. The colonizers are conscious of their welfare and not that of colonized. The domination and marginalization of the colonized are the bane of their progress, and the colonizers are aware of it, and will not appreciate the system to change so that the colonized will not improve economically, politically, and socially.

The colonizers are no longer the only ones that scramble for Africa, and her resources. Asia, especially China is also in the race for the exploitation, extraction and struggle for raw materials in Africa. Wengraf embellishes, "Above all, China's industrial growth is heavily implicated in the new scramble for Africa as it seeks out reliable sources for oil for its own growing domestic needs."[42] The mad rush for the scramble of Africa is hinged on oil and other natural resources. This is so because the colonizers want to be assured of raw materials all the time for their industrial growth. This is aptly described as "energy security"[43]

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[41] Wengrat, *Extracting Profit*, 197.
[42] Wengrat, *Extracting Profit*, 198.
[43] Wengrat, *Extracting Profit*, 198.

China's tactics of accomplishing a share, and control of the raw materials in Nigeria and other parts of Africa is by having a very powerful, and firm stronghold in African countries and cities where the colonizers are unwilling to take the desired risks, or have discarded. This strategy is assisting China to establish their hegemony in those places and to outbid their competitors. Howard French supports,

> Africa more than any other place, has been…the focus of extraordinary Chinese energy as rising great power casts its gaze far and wide for opportunity, like never before in its history. Sensing that Africa has been cast aside by the West in the wake of the Cold War, Beijing saw the continent as a perfect proving ground for some Chinese companies to cut their teeth in international business. It certainly did not hurt that Africa was also the repository of an immense share of global resources-raw materials that were vital both for China's extraordinary ongoing industrial expansion and for its across- the boarder push for national reconstruction.[44]

China is subtly recolonizing Africa. China is doing this by investing in where the colonizers abandoned because of domestic pressure, and where the policies are unfavorably to them.

China is astute in extracting raw materials from Africa. China is not applying the scheme of the colonizers rather it is using a novel structure of exchanging oil for infrastructure. Khadija Sharife writes,

> Ghananian cocoa, Gabonese iron, and Congolese oil have been swapped for construction of dams (Bui, Poubara, and River Dam), allowing Chinese corporations such as Sinohydro to capture the bulk of Africa's hydropower market. The "barter system" thus enables China to export goods and labor, facilitating for China the opportunity to "import" their recycled project capital in addition to African resources.[45]

China wants to supersede the colonizers. China is eager to outclass the colonizers by flooding Nigeria and other African markets with Chinese products. China, will appreciate African to buy more of their products than that of the colonizers. When will Nigeria and other

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[44] Howard French, *China's Second Continent: How a Million Migrants Are Building a New Empire in Africa* (New York: Vintage, 2014), 4.

[45] Khadija Sharife, "All Roads Lead Back to China," Foreign Policy in Focus, May 24, 2011, https://fpif.org/all/.

African countries be able to use the raw materials nature endowed the continent with to development the continent? In effect when will Africans realize that the scramble for Africa is for economic and political advantage of the colonizer? Will there be a time when the colonizers; and now China use the resources in Nigeria to develop Nigeria, build infrastructure and alleviate poverty? When the raw materials in Nigeria and other African countries are exhausted, as it is been depleted, how will the colonizers relate to Africa and precisely Nigeria and Nigerians? Will the colonizers welcome Africans more Nigerians in their land realizing that they impoverished African by exploitation and domination? Will they ever consent that their development is basically from especially Nigeria and other parts of Africa? If neo-colonialism is not checked it will plunge Nigeria and other Africa countries into extreme destitution. Evidently, it has been manifested that neo-colonialism is not assisting Nigeria and other African countries to progress. The colonizers consider and develop their places first and then give Nigeria and other African countries the residue which will never be sufficient to end poverty and enhance progress. On the same token, the colonizers have helped in the economic development of Africa.

3.2.3 Foreign Aids

African leaders, especially Nigerian leaders, are addicted to foreign aids. The dependence of African leaders on aids have giving their donors the opportunity to colonize them. Aid has a powerful effect on state institutions in Nigeria, and Africa as a whole. Foreign aids have deprived African countries the necessary autonomy to make decisions that are genuinely in the interests of their people. This gives donors the power and leverage to direct key aspects of the

government's economic and political agenda. This duly makes foreign aid another prime cause that instigates poverty in Nigeria, and would be accessed in this sub division.

It is crystal clear that Nigeria is wallowing in extreme poverty. Nigeria is in deep debt, hunger, disease, illiteracy, and civil unrest. This situation is not peculiar to Nigeria alone. It prevails in developing countries. Nigeria and other countries of Africa are worse today than they were at the end of colonialism because of foreign aids. Harold Nyikal argues, "Observing the living conditions of the rapidly growing population, it is apparent that this is actually the case. I painfully agree that living conditions are worse now, but reiterate that colonialism is not over as such."[46] This is because, colonialism, damaged Nigeria and other African countries economically, politically and culturally. It stimulated the depletion of resources, lack of industrialization, labor exploitation, unfair taxation, loss of the man power for food production, the breaking up of African traditional society and values.

This neo-colonialism called foreign aid is masked under the pretext of economic support for Africa. Foreign aid according to Dambisa Moyo means, "Aid payments made directly to governments either through government-to-government transfers (in which case it is termed bilateral aid) or transferred via institutions such as the World Bank (known as multilateral aid)."[47] Following, Roger Riddell gives a broader description of foreign aid. He defines foreign aid as

> the transfer of physical goods, skills and technical know-how, financial grants and loans by donors to recipient countries. This comprises of all forms of aid, ranging from food aid to technical aid then to loan aid from the developed countries to the under developed or, its modified usage, developing countries. Hence, foreign aid consists of religious

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[46] Harold Nyikal, "Neo-colonialism in Africa: The Economic Crisis in Africa and the Propagation of the Status Quo by the World Bank/IMF and WTO," Docslib.org, June 2, 2005, 1-17, https://docslib.org/doc/6718720/neo-colonialism-in-africa-the-economic-crisis-in-africa.

[47] Moyo, *Dead Aid*, 7.

> institutions, governmental organizations, United Nations, political and trade unions, community groups that disburse humanitarian assistance, debt relief, technical assistance, grants and loans to developing countries.[48]

Foreign aid is not always a free resource transfer. It arrives with economic and political conditions. In many cases official donors require that recipient countries pursue reforms or policies that the donor feel should promote economic growth or development. This requirement by the official donors is referred to as aid conditionality. There are various types of foreign aid. In his review of Arnold's work *Aid in Africa*, Robert L. Curry offers the following definitions for these types of aid.

"Bilateral Aid: This is direct country to country aid; for example, aid given by France or Britain in response to Kenya or Nigeria request of loan. Such loans or assistance is intended to encourage equitable and sustainable economic growth in many developing countries."[49]

"Multilateral Aid: This consists of aid channeled through international agencies such as World Bank, European Commission, UN and African Development Bank. This type of aid contributes substantial funding to various multilateral institutions that provide economic assistance to developing countries."[50]

"Project Aid: This is provided for a precise development: for the construction of a dam or the building of roads, the preparation of a university complex or for a scheme of integrated rural development."[51]

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[48] Roger Riddell, *Does Aid Really Work?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 16.

[49] Robert L. Curry, review of *Aid in Africa*, by Guy Arnold, *Journal of African Studies* 9, no. 4 (Winter 1982): 201.

[50] Curry, review of *Aid in Africa*, 202.

[51] Curry, review of *Aid in Africa*, 202

"Program Aid: This consists of more general help for country's ongoing development efforts without the aid being tied to specific project. Such aid provides foreign exchange which allows the recipient to purchase foreign inputs and sustain its development."[52]

"Technical Assistance: This covers three activities. First, the provision of experts and advisers, second, technical assistance is a kind of training in which experts are sent to train local people at college, university or some training institution. Third, technical assistance may include the supply of equipment associated with a particular training endeavor."[53]

"Financial Aid: This type of aid ranges from straight grants which are normally made available to the poorest countries; soft loans (finance provided on easy terms below the market rate); to hard loans at the full market rate. The bulk of financial aid is in form of loans which have to be repaid. Such loans have various degrees of concession. A loan which has to be repaid over, say, ten years and is charged at a rate of 10 percent interest (the full market rate) is a hard loan. But if the repayment period is extended to twenty years or more and the interest charge is reduced substantially below ten percent the loan becomes soft loan."[54]

"Food Aid: This consists mainly of cereals followed by dairy products, fats and cooking oils. This type of aid is meant to combat hunger and malnutrition. It is the provision of food or cash to purchase food in times of emergency or to provide longer term solutions in areas where food shortages exist. It is aimed at creating food security."[55]

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[52] Curry, review of *Aid in Africa*, 202.
[53] Curry, review of *Aid in Africa*, 203.
[54] Curry, review of *Aid in Africa*, 204.
[55] Curry, review of *Aid in Africa*, 205.

"Emergency Assistance: This is given in response to disasters, floods, earthquake, drought, or other natural calamities and to provide for refugees created by such disaster or as a result of wars."[56]

The disbursement of foreign aid to developing countries depends on the agreement between the donor countries and the recipient countries. But most often, the economic support is directly enforced or institutionalized by World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). This aid program has negative effect on Nigeria and the whole of Africa. It makes African countries especially Nigeria to perpetually owe and rely on Western countries. Nyikal mentions,

> The policies enforced on poor African countries through these organizations have chained Africa to continued dependence on western economies for mere subsistence, by preventing self- help to the continent's economic problems. Moreover, the same policies seem to favor a trade imbalance to the already wealthy Western economies over struggling ones in Africa. This economic colonization of Africa has done and continues to do as much damage to the continent as the imperial colonialism and its after effects did.[57]

World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) formulate policies that favor Western countries, grow their economy, and in turn cage African countries. This is tactfully done so that African countries will be enticed to borrow and thereby endangering the future of the continent. This form of neo-colonialism is overtly having negative impact on Africa as a whole and Nigeria in particular. It is hindering the development of the continent. A brief history of World Bank, International Monetary Fund and World Trade Organization will be beneficial to embellish their intent and how they operate.

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[56] Curry, review of *Aid in Africa*, 205.
[57] Nyikal, "Neo-colonialism in Africa," 1-17.

World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF); jointly addressed as the Bretton Woods institutions, were created in 1944 with an aim to help rebuild the economies that had been greatly affected by World War 11. The original plans included an international trade organization, but it was not until 1995 that the World Trade Organization (WTO) was formed. The IMF would create a stable climate for international trade by harmonizing its members' monetary policies, and maintaining exchange stability. It would be able to provide temporary financial assistance to countries encountering difficulties with their balance of payments. The World Bank, on the other hand, would serve to improve the capacity of countries to trade by lending money to war-ravaged and impoverished countries for reconstruction and development projects. By 1944 none of the colonized African countries had attained their independence and hence were neither members nor intended beneficiaries of this grand plan. The bank is governed under a board of governors, whose voting powers are based on the members' capital subscriptions which means the members with the greatest financial contributions have the greatest say in the Bank's decision-making process.

World Trade Organization was established in 1995 based on a set of rules for global trade had been negotiated in round table negotiations since the 1947 General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The aim of the WTO is to ensure that global trade is conducted smoothly and peacefully and it does this by creating rules that govern global trade, which have to be followed by member countries. Countries become members by ratifying WTO regulations and in so doing are governed by the regulations not only when involved in international trade, but also within their respective borders. This means that WTO rules become a part of a country's domestic legal system. The WTO is run by its member governments. All major decisions are made by the membership as a whole, either by ministers or by their ambassadors or delegates. Decisions are

normally taken by consensus. In this respect, WTO is different from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. In the WTO, power is not delegated to a board of directors or the organization's head. In this manner the poorest countries are in a better position to influence decisions of the WTO, than they are in the World Bank/IMF.

As noted above, basic infrastructure in African countries, especially Nigeria are dilapidated, economic progress is slow, access to food, health and education is meager and expensive. Moyo stresses, "The continent was characterized by a largely uneducated population, low salaried employment, a virtually and non-existent tax base, poor access to global markets and derelict infrastructure"[58] In addition to this, Nigeria and other Africa countries are inherently in debt to the developed Western countries. Much of the money borrowed is used to fight economic hardships, but clearly have failed to make any meaningful progress to ameliorate the situation. Indebtedness promotes poverty in Nigeria and other African countries because most African countries were in debt almost as soon as they gained independence. The amount of debt has been rising, there have been no viable economic planning, Nigeria and other African countries have not been investing appropriately, and they thought the flow will be indefinite. Moyo narrates,

> Africa has received aid continually for at least fifty years. Aid has been constantly relentless, and with no time limit to work against. Without the inbuilt threat that aid might be cut, and without the sense that one day it could all be over. African governments view aid as a permanent, reliable, consistent source of income and have no reason to believe that the flows won't continue into indefinite future. There is no incentive for long- term financial planning, no reason to seek alternatives to fund development, when all you have to do is sit back and bank the cheques.[59]

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[58] Moyo, *Dead Aid*, 13.
[59] Moyo, *Dead Aid*, 36.

The failure of Africans and indeed Nigeria to have long term planning with aid is tragic. That infrastructure was not improved, and maintained is a hindrance to development. Above all, that Nigeria made aid available to all aspects like civil service, military, and political institutions without proper attention to physical infrastructure deters progress.

Apparently, Nigeria and other African countries debt is one of the most debilitating problems impeding the progress of Africa. The challenge lies in its inability to service this debt. Nigeria and other African countries are unable to service the huge debts and at the same time build their economies and fight poverty. Nyikal describes,

> The servicing of the external debt consumes national income thus hindering both public and private investments. Additionally, having a large debt overhang erodes the confidence of both foreign and domestic private investors who are usually sensitive to uncertainty…Finally, servicing of debt in the African context is placing an enormous fiscal pressure. Such pressure has an adverse effect on public investment, evident in the declining share of public investment from late 1970s onwards in most African countries and on physical and social infrastructure.[60]

It is clear that Africa's more so Nigeria's wealth is being repatriated to the richer countries in the west, just like it was in the colonial days, but disguised under servicing. This is another form of economic colonialism and domination. Because of debt, both international and local investors are afraid to invest in Nigeria. This situation has intensified unemployment, underemployment, crime, corruption and other social ills thereby making absolute poverty a reality in Nigeria.

Above all, before aid is granted to Nigeria and Africa as a whole there are conditions. Often these conditions are unfavorable to Nigeria, it favors mainly western countries. According to Moyo, "This is the notion that the imposition of rules and regulations set by donors to govern

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[60] Nyikal, "Neo-Colonialism in Africa," 1-17.

the conditions under which aid is disbursed can ultimately determine its success or failure. In the 1980s conditionalities attached to African aid policies would become the mantra."[61] Ultimately, the recipients are required to observe certain strict conditions imposed on the by the imperialist. In summary, it is either you take it or you leave it. Moyo demonstrates,

> Donors have tended to tie aid in three ways. First, it is often linked to procurement. Countries that take aid have to spend it on specific goods and services which originated from the donor countries, or a group selected by them. This extends to staff as well: donors employ their own citizens even when suitable candidates for the job exist in the poor country. Second, the donor can reserve the right to preselect the sector and/or project that their aid would support. Third, aid flows only as long as the recipient country agrees to a set of economic and political policies.[62]

Africa countries are not at liberty to use the aid as they deem fit, they are regulated, and the surveillance is high. They don't even have the freedom to apply the aid to their basic and conceived needs. They use the aid at the discretion, and will of the colonizers. Moreover, they don't have the independence to employ their own people who are qualified to work. Rather the imperialists find it very comfortable to have their own citizens' work in Nigeria. This retards the expertise of the country. This systemic segregation and oppression, is a systematic method to extract the wealth of Africa by the West and thereby impoverished the continent.

Not satisfied with the conditions, these institutions World Bank, and International Monetary Fund, also introduce structural adjustment programs to Nigeria when they grant the country aid. Structural adjustment programs instigate poverty in Nigeria because they aim at trade liberalization, reducing price and structural rigidities by such means as removing subsidies. Nyikal elaborates,

> To ensure debt repayment and economic restructuring the IMF/World Bank imposed structural Adjustment programs modeled on the neo-liberal ideology that the optimal

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[61] Moyo, *Dead Aid*, 38.
[62] Moyo, *Dead Aid*, 39.

> economic system is achieved by giving free reign to market participants, privatization, free trade, and the shrinking of government intervention in the economy. The structural Adjustment Programs were a precondition to new loans from the World Bank and renegotiations of currents debts. … Over the years it has turned out that the policies have neither alleviated the huge debts nor improved the economies of the developing countries.[63]

By implication, neo-liberalism increases the oppressive power of the colonizers. It entails monitoring, and minimizing the authority of the colonized. It renders the government incapacitated to interfere on the activities of the market, private investors, and the economy. Neo-liberalism reduces government expense for social security and social goods.

The Structural Adjustment Programs prescribed to Nigeria, and other African countries are not favorable for economic development. There are not beneficial to the progress of Nigeria because they are structured to the advantage of the colonizers. The Structural programs are according to Nyikal,

> Privatization of government enterprises and decreased government spending; liberalization of trade and lifting of import and export restrictions; increased interest rates; liberalization of the money markets and devaluation of currencies; and lastly, market pricing and the removal of price controls and government subsidies. All these measures have negative effects that can arguably far outweigh the intended economic benefit.[64]

In essence, privatization of government enterprises will open the gates to foreign investors who ultimately will repatriate profits instead of reinvesting locally to promote growth. This stimulates massive layoffs and pay cuts. Again, reduced government expenditure will hinder citizens of essential services like health and education. Nyikal comments, "Social services, such as health and education cannot be run with the aim of profit, so privatizing them and/or reducing government spending hurts social welfare in general."[65] In effect, Structural

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[63] Nyikal, "Neo-Colonialism in Africa," 1-17.
[64] Nyikal, "Neo-Colonialism in Africa," 1-17.
[65] Nyikal, "Neo-colonialism in Africa," 1-17.

Adjustment programs minimize government expenditure in Nigeria. It hampers the availability of basic needs, it deteriorates living standards for most households, payments for food and services and other items become more difficult. It predisposes inflation. Moreover, it depletes the revenue of farmers, and the consequence is that they produce less which causes shortage of basic commodities, and increases poverty rate overnight. Owoicho Abbah asserts,

> The Structural Adjustment was accompanied by falling real wages. The redistribution of income from urban to rural areas and reduced expenditure of the government on such things as health and education led to increase in social costs and reduction in social spending for most people. There was scarcity of food, astronomical hikes in commodity prices and increase in crime rate. The decrease in spending on social programs and especially on petroleum subsidy contributed to domestic unrest that were essentially anti-SAP. There were nationwide riots, strikes and demonstrations such as Muslim-Christian riots.[66]

Just as a Structural Adjustment Program is a hindrance to economic development, so also is the tying of aid to democracy. The colonizers perceived democracy as a panacea to poverty in Nigeria, and Africa as a whole. For the colonizers, they expected democracy to work for the welfare of the people, correct the mistakes of the past, and improve infrastructure. They emphasize democracy as a system that will usher in accountability, responsibility and promote human dignity. Democracy, according to Dictionary.com, is "a form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised directly by them or by their elected agents under a free electoral system."[67] This entails that democracy gives a greater percentage of the population access to the political decision-making process, and this in turn ensures contract

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[66] Owoicho Abbah, "The Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in the Context of Nigeria as a Developing Country and an Explanation of the Key Concepts of Privatization, Deregulation and Liberalization," Academia.edu, accessed February 2, 2024, 1-19, https://www.academia.edu/10445537/The_Structural_Adjustment_Programme_In_the_Context_of_Nigeria_as_a_Developing_Country.

[67] Dictionary.com, s.v. "democracy," accessed February 2, 2024, Dictionary.com/browse/democracy.

enforcement through an independent judiciary. It is because of this that aid given Western countries and their agents stated that

> Under this sky, democracy is seen as Africa's economic salvation: erasing corruption, economic cronyism, and anticompetitive and inefficient practices, and removing once and for all the ability for a sitting incumbent to capriciously seize wealth. Democracies pursue more equitable and transparent economic policies, the types of policies that are conducive to sustainable economic growth in the long run.[68]

Although there are potential positive aspects of democracy, democracy proves not to be the solution to economic development in Africa. Aid-funded democracy does not guard against a government bent on altering property rights for its own benefit. It does not stop dishonesty, neither does it stop exploitation. Moyo explores,

> The uncomfortable truth is that far from being a prerequisite for economic growth, democracy can hamper development as democratic regimes find it difficult to push through economically beneficial legislation amid rival parties and jockeying interests. In a perfect world, what poor countries at the lowest rungs of economic development need is not a multi-party democracy, but in fact a decisive benevolent dictator to push through the reforms required to get the economy moving…The Western mindset erroneously equates a political system of multi-party democracy with high-quality institutions.[69]

On the whole, Structural Adjustment programs did not address the problem of poverty in Nigeria, and other African countries. It was designed to address the symptoms of the economic problems and not the root causes of poverty or economic crisis. The need for policies to increase productivity of Nigeria and other African countries and improving their social and technological infrastructures remain unaddressed. Meanwhile, the IMF/World Bank made policies aimed at increasing government's ability to repay loans. Nyikal reports,

> None of the countries even those that implemented Structural Adjustment Programs religiously have improved their economic situation to date. After two decades of Structural Adjustment Programs in Nigeria, and may be other African countries are still suffering from high inflation, lower spending on health, education, housing, sanitation

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[68] Moyo, *Dead Aid*, 41.
[69] Moyo, *Dead Aid*, 42.

> and portable water. Illiteracy has not declined, unemployment is incredibly high and average income has for the lucky ones to be employed barely suffice for subsistence.[70]

By implication Structural Adjustment Programs led to the postponement or total abandonment of development programs such as new roads, schools, and hospitals. Existing infrastructure became cash strapped with lack of books in schools, lack of medicine in hospitals, roads in perpetual despair. It has driven Nigeria into deeper debt burden, deindustrialization, unemployment, and other forms of economic challenges, while western economies still benefit enormously from Nigeria production and markets.

Foreign aids with the conditions attached is the basis of the conceptual neocolonialism taking place across Africa. It explains how and why donor nations have become major economic and political decision makers in Nigeria and other African countries. It is therefore necessary for Africans leaders to looking for viable alternative to aids. As demonstrated above, foreign aids have not assisted Nigeria to progress economically, politically and socially. The contribution of foreign aids to the growth of the country cannot be denied, but it is negligible.

3.2.4 Corruption

Corruption is a major factor that emboldens poverty, and hinder economic progress in Nigeria. Corruption is not alien to Nigeria and Nigerians, especially the political leaders. What is corruption, forms of corruption and the impact of this monster will be the core of this subsection.

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[70] Nyikal, "Neo-colonialism in Africa," 1-17.

Right from the colonial days till the present, corruption has been the greatest challenge to Nigeria. It has become endemic and cancerous. It is found in every sector of the society. Both old and young, male and female are engrossed in corruption. John Inyanga attests,

> Corruption in Nigeria is a cancer that affects all sectors of the nation and no person or institution is free from its effects. The executive, legislative and judicial arms of government at both the federal and state levels are involved in corruption creation in the nation. The financial institutions, security outfits, private and public organizations and institutions, the media, academic institutions, the electoral body, politicians and all sectors of the nation are all involved in the breeding and consumption of corruption in the country.[71]

Corruption is not beneficial to any nation. Both military and civilian regimes have made concerted efforts to curb corruption but to no avail. Instead of minimizing, corruption exponentially increases daily. This motivated the International Transparency to rank Nigeria as one of the most corrupt country in some of their surveys as listed below.

According to Uzochukwu Mike,

> In the year 2000, Transparency International conducted a survey on the corruption levels of 90 countries, … Nigeria was ranked as the most corrupt because the country occupied 90th position in terms of transparency. In 2001, Nigeria was ranked the second –most corrupt nation in the world out of 91 countries, second only to Bangladesh. In 2002, Nigeria was ranked the second most corrupt in the world, after the organization survey 102 countries. Nigeria was seen at the bottom, occupying the 101st position in terms of confidence Interval. In 2003, Nigeria received the same ranking, making no improvement. In 2004, there was little improvement when compared to the previous four years. Nigeria was ranked the third most corrupt in that year, performing better than Bangladesh and Haiti. That year, 146 nations were surveyed. In 2005, Nigeria improved among the 158 countries surveyed by Transparency International. Nigeria was ranked eighth most corrupt. More countries were surveyed by Transparency International in 2006. 163 countries were surveyed that year. The results showed some improvement, and Nigeria was ranked the 21st most corrupt in the world. Haiti was the world's most corrupt nation that year. In 2007, Nigeria was ranked 33rd most corrupt country in the world. In 2012, Transparency International again deemed Nigeria one of the most corrupt nations in the world. That year, the country ranked 139th out of the 176 surveyed countries,

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[71] John Inyanga, "Demarketing Corruption in Nigeria: The Role of the Stakeholders in the Agenda," *ARC Journal of Business and Economics* 1, no. 1 (2015): 1-12. https://www.academia.edu/14433045/Demarketing_Corruption_in_Nigeria_The_Role_of_the_Stakeholders_in_the_Agenda.

> making Nigeria the 37th most corrupt nation. In 2013, Nigeria ranked 144 out 177 surveyed countries in terms of transparency. The score made Nigeria most corrupt country in the world that year. The result published by the organization also showed that Nigeria scored 25% out of 100 in terms of transparency. In the year 2014 Nigeria ranked 136 out of 174 surveyed countries. The result showed that Nigeria was 38th most corrupt in the world. It was disappointing that in the 2017 corruption perception index released by Transparency International in 2018, Nigeria relapsed deeper into corruption –moving 12 steps backward from 136 to 148. In the year 2018 Corruption index ranked 180 countries and territories Nigeria occupied number 144 on the table with Comoros, Guatemala, Kenya and Mauritania. Also the score of the country in that year was 27 which was same with that of 2017. Based on the position of 144 on the table, it indicated that Nigeria was the 36th most corrupt country in the world in 2018.[72]

This survey says much about corruption in Nigeria. It has corroded the whole nation from top to bottom. The issue is that the leadership of the country propagates corruption, and the poor suffer the effect most. Before evaluating how corruption stimulates poverty, a conceptual analysis of the term will be essential.

Although there is no widespread or comprehensive definition as to what constitutes corrupt behavior, the most prominent definitions share a common emphasis on the abuse of public power or position for personal gratification. According to D. H. Bayley, corruption is "a general term covering misuse of authority as a result of considerations of personal gain, which need not be monetary."[73] The implication of corruption is deficiency in character of and moral principles. The World Bank and Transparency International (TI) refer to corruption as "the abuse of public office for private gains for the benefit of the holder of the office or some third party. Viewed from these definitions, corruption can be broadly understood as unethical behavior,

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[72] Uzochukwu Mike, "Corruption in Nigeria: Review, Causes, Effects, and Solutions," Soapboxie, October 14, 2022, Soapboxie.com/world-politics/Corruption-in-Nigeria.

[73] David H. Bayley, "The Effects of Corruption in a Developing Nation," *Political Research Quarterly* 19, no. 4 (2016): 721, https://doi.org/10.1177/106591296601900410.

which violates the norms of the system of political order."[74] Ultimately, corruption can be for private and group enrichment and for power preservation purposes. Following, J. S. Nye identifies corruption with "behavior which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private-regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary or status gains; or violates rules against the exercise of certain types of private-regarding influence."[75] When extended to include unscrupulous performance. The above definitions underscore behavioral element. They encompass abuses by government officials such as embezzlement and cronyism, as well as abuses linking public and private actors such as bribery, extortion, influence peddling, and fraud. Assessing the above definitions, it can be clearly deduced that corruption hinders good governance, sustainable development, democratic process, fair business practices, and lack of patriotism. The ubiquitous practice of corruption in Nigeria makes it easily discernible in every facet of the society. It is abundant in politics, universities and colleges, the police force, churches, and in the custom service. The corruption of the political class gave rise to corruption in every other place in Nigeria. Political elites see corruption as a normal way of life. The impunity with which they promote corruption has plunged Nigeria into deep economic crisis.

3.2.5 Political Corruption

This is one of the worst forms of corruption in Nigeria. It is horrific because it involves mainly the three arms of government namely; the executive, legislative, and the judiciary.

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[74] Richard McGrath Skinner, "Political and Governmental Corruption," in *Encyclopedia of Sociology*, Encyclopedia.com, accessed February 3, 2024, https://www.encyclopedia.com/social-sciences/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/political-and-governmental-corruption.

[75] J. S. Nye, "Corruption and Political Development: A Cost-Benefit Analysis," *American Political Science Review* 61, no. 2 (June 1967): 419, https://doi.org/10.2307/1953254.

Political corruption, and how it operates will be examined in all ramifications in this subcategory.

Political corruption has brought shame and unprecedented economic quagmire to Nigerians. According to Osakede Kehinde, Ijimakinwa Samuel, Adesanya Taiwo, Ojo Ann, Ojikutu Oluwadamilola, and Abubarka Alhassan, political corruption is

> the familiar corruption that takes place in government or by government officials and their accomplices in the private sector. . . . This is the kind of corruption that obtains in the three arms of government in a democratic rule, namely, executive, legislative and judiciary. Corruption at this level is the highest because it involves state fund[s].[76]

State funds are money meant to provide necessary social services to the people. But instead of providing the required services like roads, electricity, water, hospital, schools and other essential services, to the people, the money is embezzled by those in power. They use the money for their own personal aggrandizement, neglecting diametrically the primary purpose of the money.

This incessant stealing of state funds or public money by those in power stimulates poverty, and impedes economic development in Nigeria. The political class does this because they believe they are above the law, and that nothing will be done to them. According to Uzochukwu Mike, "Books have been written and press companies have published articles about high level corruption in Nigeria politics, yet the perpetrators pretend as though they are not the people being talked about. They believe they are above the law. But little do they understand the injuries they are causing to the country and the citizens."[77] The insensitivity of the political class is a scourge to Nigerians because of the negative impacts. The deleterious effect of political

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[76] Osakede Kehinde, et al., "Corruption in the Nigeria Public Sector: An Impediment to Good Governance and Sustainable Development," *Review of Public Administration and Management* 4, no. 8 (December 2015): 82.

[77] Mike, "Corruption in Nigeria."

corruption is the bane of Nigeria in the march towards economic progress and liberation. The various forms of corruption by the political class include; contracts, embezzlement, and bribery.

3.2.6 Contract

The award of contracts by the political class is one of the forms of how political corruption functions. This sector will delineate what Political corruption is, and how it corrodes the country. Political corruption is perceived everywhere especially, made more manifest on how functional politicians award contracts. They award contracts knowing that such contracts will not be executed, and even if it is executed it would be done haphazardly because they demand so much money known as kick back from the contractors that the actual contractors are left with nothing to execute the contract. Government officials award contracts to those who are unable to deliver, and to non-certified contractors. They do so, with the sole aim of enriching themselves, and their cronies. This leads to loss of public funds through misallocations or higher expenses and lower quality goods, services and works. Moyo manifests,

> Endemic corruption also target public contractors. In these environments, contracts which should be awarded to those who can deliver on the best terms, in the best time, are given to those whose principal aim is to divert as much as possible to their own pockets. What ensue are lower-quality infrastructure projects, and enfeebled public services, to the detriment of growth. Similarly, the allocation of government spending suffers as corrupt officials are likely to choose projects less on the basis of public welfare and more on the opportunities for extorting bribes and diverting funds. The bigger the project, the greater the opportunity. Projects whose exact value is difficult to monitor present lucrative opportunities for corruption-it is easier to siphon money from large infrastructure projects than from textbooks or teachers' salaries.[78]

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[78] Moyo, *Dead Aid*, 51.

The political class perceives corruption as normal. It is because of this that both the young and old struggle to align themselves to one political party or the other. They believe that once they take any position in politics, they will use corrupt tricks to fill their pockets with public funds. Given contracts to those who are inefficient, who are unable to do the job, or who will do it haphazardly is one of the various means by which politicians enrich themselves with public money, and thereby establishing poverty.

Embezzlement: is another form of political corruption and will subsequently be given serious attention. Embezzlement of public fund prevails in Nigeria, and other African countries. Many leaders have helped boost the economies of other nations by depositing embezzled money into foreign banks. Moyo affirms,

> In stark contrast, corruption analysts estimate at least US $10 billion … depart Africa every year. It is this negative corruption which bleeds Africa's public purse dry, and does nothing to address the continent's desperate needs. It is truly tragic that while stolen monies sit and earn interest in private accounts abroad, the countries for which the money was destined have stagnated, and even regressed.[79]

This disproportionate embezzlement of state funds and stashing it away in foreign banks is a common practice among the Nigerian politicians. The case of late president Sani Abacha is an example. After the death of Sani Abacha, an investigation was carried out to determine the amount of money he embezzled. The investigation led to the freezing of accounts containing about 100 million United States dollars that he stole. Okwuagbala notes, "The Abacha administration notoriously looted upwards of $3 billion in the 1990s. The federal government's agreement with the Swiss government on the return of looted funds traced to former Head of

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[79] Moyo, *Dead Aid*, 52.

State General Sani Abacha led to the remittances of US$322 million in December 2017."[80] This fraudulent accumulation process by the Nigerian leaders has resulted over time, in emptying of the national treasury and indebtedness, to the point of bankruptcy. The negative effect is dearth of resources for investment on the social, economic and overall cultural development of the masses of the people. This puts Nigeria in a very awkward situation that the wealth of the ruling class exists to mock the unspeakable mass poverty, misery and degradation of the Nigerian people.

In addition to embezzlement as a means of political corruption in Nigeria is electoral corruption. Electoral corruption; commonly prevails during election. During election, the candidates hire thugs who go around the election polling stations to highjack ballot boxes. When they steal these boxes, they then write in votes for their candidates. A new tactics that contestants have adopted currently is buying voters' card so that they can manipulate and use the cards to their advantage. Victor Dike asserts that electoral corruption includes the

> purchase of votes with money, promises of offices or special favors, coercion, intimidation, and interference with freedom of election. (Nigeria is a good example where this practice is common. Votes are bought, people are killed or maimed in the name of election, losers end up as the winners in elections, and votes turn up in areas where votes were not cast.)[81]

From the foregoing, it is noticed that electoral corruption, encourages quid pro quo deals. It undermines democratic values, especially where there is conflict between the politicians' interest and those of the public. Electoral corruption bolsters people with or without political clout to

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[80] Mike, "Corruption in Nigeria."

[81] Victor Dike, "Corruption in Nigeria: A New Paradigm for Effective Control," Academia.edu, July 21, 2008, 2, https://www.academia.edu/539777/Corruption_in_Nigeria_A_new_paradigm_for_effective_control.

illegally buy influence through illegal payoffs such as illegal funding of campaigns, and illegal campaign contributions.

Bribery: is a strong factor to be considered because it permeates all the sectors in Nigeria. Bribery prevails almost everywhere business is done in the country. It is a cankerworm that has defiled solution. This terrible syndrome has hindered the progress of Nigeria. Bribery is not confined to politicians only; it is principally in the public and private sectors. Often times, politicians, their cronies, and those in the public sector bribe top officials to commit illegal acts to their favor. Bribery can be in the form of kind or cash taken during transaction. Bribery is customary in the execution of government services such as, lower taxes, licenses, and legal outcome. Olu Awofeso and Temilayo Isaac Odeyemi argue,

> Corruption in the routine courses of Government Business: This includes bribes solicited for and paid to have compromising documents retrieve from files and for other favors. Payment for letters of recommendation, kick-backs for hiring government equipment, all forms of bribery, false travel documents and other claims, ghost workers and salary frauds, neglect of public service for personal business.[82]

It is tormenting to observe that some political leaders, including presidents, governors, and senators, members of the houses of representative, assembly, and councilors have been sued by opponents, but the sued were able to escape punishment by bribing attorneys and judges. It has been validated that bribery has negative impact because it creates economic loss and inefficiency. Bribery enthrones mediocrity thereby causing economic debacle which in effect lowers production.

Electoral corruption also results in the missing of small children. During elections in Nigeria, small children across the country begin to miss. Infant kidnapping becomes rampant and

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[82] Olu Awofeso and Temitayo Odeyemi, "The Impact of Political Leadership and Corruption on Nigeria's Development since Independence," *Journal of Sustainable Development* 8, no. 1 (2014): 1-14.

parents are usually advised to be extra vigilant of their children because of ritualists. Uzochukwu Mike notes, "This is another face of corruption, one that breaks the hearts of mothers. The missing children were used by contesting politicians to perform ritual killings in order to get protection and devilish powers that would enable them to win elections. This is corruption and wickedness in the highest order because it involves the termination of human life."[83] This practice has not stopped but it has slowed down. This practice is atrocious and odious because the people who are involved in this practice have their own children at home, yet went on capturing and killing the children of others. Corruption is not only noticeable among the political class. It exists in other institutions like; Universities and colleges, police force, Church, and custom services. Subsequently, the existence of corruption, and how it functions in the aforementioned institutions in Nigeria is portrayed.

Nigeria Universities are ranked low in the world. Evidently, the root cause is corruption. Lecturers collect money from students before they pass examination. Harassment of female students by lecturers is upsetting. Students who are unqualified gain admission to the university. Uzochukwu Mike affirms,

> How do some students find their way into universities? Some are there not by merit, but through a kind of bribery called sorting. Some rich men in the country bribe vice-chancellors and heads of departments to secure admission for their children. When this kind of dirty practice is conducted, those who would have made it on merit are cheated, as admission will not be offered to them.[84]

The resultant effect is that some of the graduates are half baked because they don't take their studies painstakingly. When you have half-baked graduates, improving the country

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[83] Mike, "Corruption in Nigeria."
[84] Mike, "Corruption in Nigeria."

economically, politically, and socially becomes a challenge. Some of the universities lack the desired amenities for studies. Students struggle for space and seats in the classrooms. Above all, corruption in the universities is instrumental to infrastructural decay, because of mismanagement, fraud, and diversion of funds for personal use. Iyabo Lawal notes,

> In 2016, a budget monitoring committee of the local chapter of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) had accused the management of OAU [Obafemi Awolowo University] of mismanaging N3.5bn [a 3.5-billion naira] intervention fund released to the institution for upgrade of facilities.
> ASUU had accused the management of the university then of spending the said sum . . . without observing due process and transparency.[85]

This accounts for why Universities in Nigeria rank low and have poor academic curriculum. With corruption in the universities, to change the status quo in the society becomes problematic. Universities produce future leaders of the country. If as studied, universities are citadel of corruption what is hope of the country in getting accountable and transparent leaders. Not that universities are paragon of corruption, there are good, and qualitative things taught in the universities which have positively helped the country to grow.

Corruption in the police force: is embarrassing. Bribery, intimidation, sexual harassment of inmates in prison, and turning the truth upside down is horrible and despicable. Police extortion on the expressway is awful. This deplorable situation, and how it retrogresses the economic advancement of the country will essentially be established. For the Nigerian police force, bribery is compulsory even when you are innocent. Some female prison inmates come out of prison pregnant. What this implies is that some policemen sexually assault women

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[85] Iyabo Lawal, "Cesspool of Corruption at Nigerian Universities," *The Guardian*, April 12, 2018, guardian.ng/features/cesspool-of-corruption-at-nigerian-universities.

who are imprisoned. Often, the women would comply given the fact that the policemen are armed with guns. Marvellous Iheukwumere affirms,

> Nigeria has a serious problem with police corruption at all levels. At the top, senior police officials embezzle staggering sums of public funds…meanwhile, at the lower levels, rank-and-file police officers regularly extort money from the public, and crime victims must pay bribes before the police will handle their cases…police extortion is so institutionalized that Nigerians are more likely to encounter police demanding bribes than enforcing the law. No wonder Nigeria police force was ranked as the worst of those included in the 2016 world internal security and police index, and that transparency International's Global corruption Barometer survey found that a staggering 69% of Nigerian citizens think that most of all police officers are corrupt.[86]

Corruption in the police force is hydra-headed. It has given Nigeria poor image both home and abroad. The police that are expected to uphold justice and fairness, in turn become unjust and dishonest in dealing with the citizens. The citizens have no hope in the police, and hardly believe that the police are their friends. This is given the reality of their encounter with the police. This overt corruption among the police has adverse effect that the good ones among them are generalized as being bad. Corruption in the police force obstructs justice and fairness. It renders some families poor and helpless. Corruption in the police force assists to enthrone, and protect corrupt leaders, and has exacerbated insecurity in the country. A country where justice and human dignity are not preserved, economic progress is usually lacking as it is in Nigeria. The Nigerian police despite their pitfalls do great job. They are gallant, and incredibly protective. It may be a case of a few given a bad name to all. If their excesses are checked, the country will admirably advance.

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[86] Marvellous Iheukwumere, "Fighting Police Corruption in Nigeria: An Agenda for Comprehensive Reform," *GAB | The Global Anticorruption Blog*, September 6, 2019, https://globalanticorruptionblog.com/2019/09/06/fighting-police-corruption-in-nigeria-an-agenda-for-comprehensive-reform/.

Corruption in the church is primarily witnessed in the "new generation churches." This has been the bane of many Nigerians. How churches institute corruption and bad examples are what this subsection will focus on. According to Uzochukwu Mike, the new generation churches are

> those churches that do not have solid origin or foundation. They are not like Catholic, Anglican, or Orthodox Churches. New generation churches are churches that start when a person who calls himself a pastor goes and rents a room, decorates it, and convinces people to join him, claiming that he has been given the power to summon signs and miracles from God.[87]

These pastors claim they can transform one's financial status. They are impostors who purport they have been called by God and possess supernatural powers. Some of them are charlatans, and use magical powers to get and retain membership. These pastors convince poor and hungry Nigerians to yield to their deceptions. The people come and the so-called pastors or men of God use their tricks to collect money that is remaining in their pockets. Uzochukwu Mike narrates,

> Some of the pastors go to the extent of using magical and devilish powers to run their church business in the name of God's power. They give the congregations what they want without them knowing the source of their so-called power. If women are in search of babies, the babies may be given to them through devilish means. Today, one of those children might steal money from a bank through armed robbery and tomorrow kill an innocent person, operating under the influence of the devil.[88]

Some of these pastors' preaching's hinge on posterity and success, with material goods as the ultimate expression of success. They give the impression that there is a nexus between godliness and wealth. Their teachings indicate that poverty is a sin.

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[87] Mike, "Corruption in Nigeria."
[88] Mike, "Corruption in Nigeria."

Although, some of these churches and their pastors provide succor for many Nigerians; they pray and provide assistance for them. Regardless, a good number of them are religious highway men ambushing vulnerable Nigerians.

Additionally, corruption flourishes in the custom service. How the Nigerian custom services propagate and induce poverty is regrettable and will subsequently be given attention. The custom services of Nigeria is the organization that is authorized to clear imported goods into the country. It is crystal clear that many Nigerians groan because customs will not release their goods until they give them bribe. At times the money they demand may be more than the goods. Mike remarks, "On most occasions, you must pay bribes to customs before your goods are cleared. Many containers are held captive by customs because the owners are not willing to pay the large amount of money demanded."[89] The Nigerian custom services have made life so harsh and unbearable for many Nigerians. They have ruined many businesses because of the amount of money they demand as bribe from people. The rapacity of the custom service does not stimulate economic development, nor alleviates poverty. The above section has explored the existence of corruption, and how it is practiced in some of the institutions in Nigeria. Its monstrous impact on the progress of the country is agonizing and dreadful. For there to be advancement there would be total overhaul of the system.

The next segment will examine the causes of corruption, and how this endemic and prevalent disease would be ameliorated.

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[89] Mike, "Corruption in Nigeria."

3.2.7 Causes of Corruption:

Corruption, pays no nation any good, rather it ushers in unsustainability in all aspects of national development. Corruption in Nigeria is as old as the country's political history; and many factors are responsible for it. The causes of corruption would be ensuing. According to Inyanga, the causes of corruption in the country, though illogical, are

> greed, avarice, and strong propensity to acquire wealth to satisfy one's daily needs and exaggerated fears of tomorrow, the presence of leaders who do not lead by example as the led will follow the corrupt behavior of their rulers; absence of basic social and economic infrastructure as individuals in the society are now their own local governments by providing their own electricity, water, security, roads, and transportation…Unlike in the past when a political office holder or a public/civil servant could retire happily with simple material wealth but rich in honesty, integrity and respect, the value system has completely changed. Any appointee of the government or a retired civil servant who could not boast of landed property, houses in cities, etc, is considered a social outfit hence corruption.[90]

It is in the bid to acquire wealth at all cost that corruption has become pervasive. Greed has caused a lot of catastrophe in Nigeria. It is because of greed that political leaders, public servants, and those in the private sectors embezzle the funds they are supposed to use for state development for their own selfish interests. Among the factors that encourages corruption in Nigeria are poor reward, weak institution,

Notably, poor reward system arouses corruption in the country. Incentives given to workers are very poor. It is difficult for them to use their wages to care for their families both nuclear and extended. Inyanga articulates,

> The poor reward system breeds corruption in the society because the salaries and wages of many workers cannot take care of the workers and their nuclear and extended families. The discrimination against the poor and the worship of the rich in all sectors of the society…makes getting rich at all cost very attractive. In Nigeria today, one is judged by the car he/she drives, the clothes one adorns, the area one lives, the schools the kids

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[90] Inyanga, "Demarketing Corruption in Nigeria," 1-12.

> attend, how much tithes and offering one pays, and how many times one travels Overseas on vacation annually…[91]

The irony is that no one cares how people make or get their money. There is no investigation of peoples' means of wealth. When people are judged by what they have, and not who they are the value system is in a state of nadir. Wealth becomes a demi-god to be worshipped, and corruption becomes customary.

Because wealth is worshipped, justice is sold and bought especially by the rich. When the rich buy justice, their offenses become inconsequential and they go scot-free. Inyanga contends,

> In all, the high incentive and reward for corruption makes a good case for being corrupt as only the rich can pay for justice and freedom in the country, the degree of their criminal offences being immaterial while the poor…are jailed for years if not for life. The fraudsters in the society are those that receive the highest traditional, religious and educational/professional titles and the bribers and bribees are worshipped and idolized as heroes and heroines by the cream of the society.[92]

This is the ugly face of corruption. Integrity, honesty and humility are relegated, whereas dishonesty and dubiousness are elevated. This lowers the moral standard of the society, and creates unconscionable quest for wealth at all cost. The essence here as shown is how Poor reward hinders improvement, and breeds criminality and delinquency which retards proper advancement.

Another factor that stimulates corruption is the weak institutions of Nigeria, dysfunctional legal system, tribal/ethnicity and poor care for the remuneration of the agencies created to fight corruption. These fragile institutions especially the judiciary which is supposed to be the legal watch dog of Nigerians is disappointing and unacceptable. How these establishments help to institute poverty will be described. According to Oladipo B. Stephens,

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[91] Inyanga, "Demarketing Corruption in Nigeria," 1-12.
[92] Inyanga, "Demarketing Corruption in Nigeria," 1-12.

> Judicial corruption could be regarded as a situation where judges are more interested in bringing money into the courthouse bank and being a productive banker rather than making certain that justice is served and citizens are treated fairly according to law…it could equally be seen as allowing case chamber decisions before entering the courtroom and just placing the decision on the record and never permitting all evidence to be entered into the record and the defendant even to speak in their own defense. This clearly explains the way unjustifiable justice within the Nigeria judicial system excels where the real fat criminals who stole for survival are nailed and subjected to media parade to serve as deterrence to the ordinary people.[93]

This inconceivable and outrageous level of allegations of corrupt practices among the people regarded as custodians of justice in Nigeria informs the need to inquire into the dimension and extent these corrupt allegations might have bartered the process of the criminal justice system in the country.

The bland involvement of the Nigerian judiciary into corruption is lamentable. It is the case of the dog eating the bone tied round its neck. As terrible as it is, the judiciary also perceives justice as its fundamental duty, and grants it at times to those concerned.

Consequences of corruption: This research has explicitly demonstrated that corruption is ubiquitous in Nigeria and adversely stimulates poverty. On the same token, it has mentioned some of the institutions that proliferate it. Next, it will state the negative consequences of corruption that animates poverty.

Poor Investment: How corruption has affected investment is contemptable. It has scared many investors and has accelerated the closure of many businesses. Because of corruption, investors are apprehensive to invest in Nigeria. This is the case with both local and international investors. The despicable consequences of corruption is what this research will give attention in

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[93] Oladipo B. Stephen, "Judicial Corruption and Impediment to Nigeria Criminal Justice System: Lessons from Justice Isa Ayo Salami versus Justice Aloysius Katsina-Alu Saga," Academia.edu, 2016, 1-21, https://www.academia.edu/30204019/judicial_corruption_in_Nigeria.

this part. Corruption reduces foreign investment into the country as no foreigner that has zero tolerance for corruption will like to work in a society where corruption is almost a norm. Lack of investment heightens unemployment, and that kindles poverty. Okwuagbala indicates, "Unemployment in Nigeria would have been eradicated to some extent if only investors were attracted to doing business in the country. Companies that would have invested in Nigeria are afraid because they do not know if the corrupt practice will ruin their industries over time. Because of this concern, they refuse to invest in Nigeria."[94] If captains of industries both local and foreigners are afraid to invest in Nigeria, the consequence obviously is unemployment. Once there is unemployment or underemployment the result is rise in poverty, hunger, and destitution. Clearly, lack of investment increases the proliferation of abandoned projects in the country, creates an unbalanced economy, and leads to a cash squeeze.

Apparently, high level of corruption instigates developmental bankruptcy. This is what Nigeria is experiencing currently. This lack of developmental project exacerbates suffering and hardship. Okwuagbala insists, "Any country with high corruption levels is likely to experience developmental bankruptcy. When some CEOs indulge in corrupt practices to make their money, economic development will suffer. When Nigeria keeps on shifting the country's currency to foreign countries, there will be less economic development in Nigeria."[95] If there is less economic activities in a country the aftermath is clear. There is reduction in the quality of goods. Income will be low; the buying power of the people is minimized, and this encourages inflation.

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[94] Mike, "Corruption in Nigeria."
[95] Mike, "Corruption in Nigeria."

Inflation leads to abject or absolute poverty. With absolute poverty, people are unable to provide their needs; even the government may not be able to provide adequate services to the people.

The infectious nature of corruption leads to calamity and disaster. There is restiveness in Nigeria. Conflict everywhere, this is caused by corruption. When the youth are unemployed they become distressed. Once, they are agitated there is disorder and destruction. Okwuagbala supports, "So many crises in Nigeria today are a result of corruption. The insecurity in Nigeria…is a consequence of corruption. The attacks…have caused disorderliness in Nigeria and seriously affected the country's economy"[96] When the economy is bad, the adverse effect is poverty. When people are poor the resultant effect is devastating. It ushers in disobedience to the rule of law, destroys peoples' confidence on government and integrity of the leaders, increases crime, and hurts investment. The causes of corruption are numerable, and the consequences unfavorable. It is because of this, that efforts have been made by various administrations to curb it. The mechanisms used by various administrations to fight corruption follows.

Fight against Corruption: The import of the consequences of corruption on the Nigerian society is that the entire Nigerian system breeds corruption. This does not suggest that all hopes have been lost as the efforts so far made by the past and present administrations in the country could still assist in curbing the social menace. The realization of the negative consequences of corruption on the socio-economic and political development of the Nigerian nation, have instigated both the past and present administrations (military and civilian regimes) to put certain strategies and machineries to minimize corruption. These mechanisms will be

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[96] Mike, "Corruption in Nigeria."

studied. As noted above, starting from the first military coup in 1966 to the last one by the late General Sani Abacha, the emphasis on the reason for the overthrow of one civilian government by the military and another military regime by another was to eradicate corruption perpetuated by such regimes in the society and thus make Nigeria a corruption-free society. Only history will reveal who was corrupt or not or more corrupt than the other(s).

3.2.8 Legislations and the Constitutional Framework

Criminal codes have been instituted to fight corruption. These penal codes and how effective they are will be the objective of this subsection. According to Inyanga,

> Both the criminal code in the south and the penal code in the Northern Nigeria have their provisions meant to abolish corruption in the country example section 419 of the 1999 constitution of Nigeria as amended. In addition to these constitutional provisions are such legislations like the money Laundering (prohibition) Act, the corrupt practices and other Related Offenses Act, The Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (Establishment) Act, the Advance Free Fraud and Other Related Offences Act, and the Dishonest Cheque (Offences) Act. Others are the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency Act, The Examination Malpractice Act, the Bank and other Financial Institutions Act, the Failed Banks (Recovery of Debts and Financial Malpractices in Banks) Act and the Trafficking in person (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration (Amendment) Act. The rest are the Electoral Act, the Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act, the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (Amendment) Act, the Public Procurement Act, the Fiscal Responsibility Act, the Freedom of Information Act and the Independent Practices Commission Act etc.[97]

These are some of the systems put in place to check corruption. Why they have not succeeded to ameliorate corruption is worrisome and will be explored later. Other means set by government to curtail corruption include Nigeria Membership of International bodies.

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[97] Inyanga, "Demarketing Corruption in Nigeria," 1-12.

3.2.9 Nigerian Membership of International Conventions on Fight against Corruption

To fight corruption Nigeria entered into bilateral relationship with some organizations. The target of this part is to show some of these consensual friendships. To drastically reduce the rate of corruption, Nigeria as a nation, formerly signed international agreements in the form of conventions with other developing nations to eradicate corruption in their respective nations. Prominent among these conventions, though others do exist, is the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) that was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on October 10, 2003. These methods though effective in their own manner did not check corruption as expected by Nigeria, which gave rise to some indigenous procedures.

Administrative Frameworks on Corruption Eradication in Nigeria: Nigeria still worried by the menace of corruption introduced some local processes to curb it. These actions are thus evaluated. The non-statutory but administrative measures taken by the past governments and administrations in Nigeria against corruption are the Ethical Revolution, War against Indiscipline (WAI), Mass Mobilization for Social Justice and Economic Recovery (MANSER) and War Against Indiscipline and Corruption (WAIC). At present there is re-banding Nigeria program with emphasis on Nigeria: Good People, Great Nation aimed at preserving the image of the country locally and internationally.

It is disheartening that in spite of the measures adopted to fight and minimize corruption in Nigeria, the social evil is ever growing and becoming more pervasive in every sector and segment of the Nigerian society. To minimize corruption, Nigerians, especially functional politicians need to embrace the damage that corruption causes both internally and externally. There is urgent need to educate and mobilize Nigerians to pledge to ethical behavior and integrity in office. Citizens can mobilize through support for community actions to demand

accountability from their leaders. This segment has manifested the consequences of corruption, and how essentially it is to ameliorate corruption. If that is done, the economic condition will improve, and poverty will be reduced in Nigeria. Corruption is not the only cause of poverty in Nigeria. Other factors will follow. Poor leadership is another cause. In considering the causes of poverty in Nigeria, poor leadership is paramount.

Leadership: Poor leadership, is another paramount challenge that causes poverty in Nigeria. The political leaders have inflicted a lot hardship on the people. This is quite disheartening and depressing. This appalling leadership will be the next to be investigated. Added to corruption as the cause of poverty in Nigeria is poor Leadership.

Leadership has been defined in so many ways that it is hard to come up with a single working definition. It is because of this that Ogbeidi defines leadership as "a body of people who lead and direct the activities of a group towards a shared goal. It also denotes the ability to lead, direct and organize a group."[98] Leadership inspires a team to accomplish certain goals. It lies in the ability to get things done. Effectively, leadership involves empowering others to become competent leaders as well. According to Norman Schwarzkopf, "Leadership is a potent combination of strategy and character. But if you must be without one, be without the strategy."[99] Character is stressed because it is the mental and moral quality that is distinctive to an individual. It is what makes and defines a person. Character is the integrity of a leader. John Gardener explains leadership as the "process of persuasion or example by which an individual induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her

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[98] Ogbeidi, "Political Leadership and Corruption in Nigeria," 4.

[99] Norman Schwarzkopf Jr., quoted in James Charlton, *The Military Quotation Book* (2002), 83, https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Norman_Schwarzkopf_Jr.

followers."[100] Leadership engages in organizing a group of people to attain a common goal. It helps to establish a clear vision for the group. Leadership influences, and directs the group to be consistent and articulate so that they can development mentally and physically. In this regard a leader must be prudent, disciplined, have good character, vision, tact and be able to lead by example. The above descriptions of leadership are informative, edifying, and insightful. It can be a mantra, to the political leaders of Nigeria. Following, will be the description of political leadership in Nigeria.

Political Leadership: has been described as the bane of Nigeria. This will be examined to decipher how it has inflicted poverty on Nigerians. Political leadership means people who are" accountable to a group or organization. They bear the obligation and responsibility of the group in order to help in the attainment of their goal. According to Ogbeidi, *political leadership*

> refers to the ruling class that bears the responsibility of managing the affairs and resources of a political entity by setting and influencing policy priorities affecting the territory through different decision-making structures and institutions created for the orderly development of the territory. It could also be described as the human element that operates the machineries of government on behalf of an organized territory. This includes people who hold decision-making positions in government, and people who seek positions, whether by means of election, coup d'etat, appointment, electoral fraud, conquest, right of inheritance or other means.[101]

There is no one means of becoming a political leader. All the above means of becoming a political leader are valid, even though some are obsolete, and no longer fashionable like coup d'etat, and electoral fraud.

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[100] Eric Goldman, "Leadership for the Next Generation: Lessons from Gardener's *On Leadership*," *Eric Goldman* (blog), September 16, 2008, ericgoldman.name/en/2008/leadership-for-the-next-generation-lessons-from-gardners-on-leadership.

[101] Ogbeidi, "Political Leadership and Corruption in Nigeria," 4.

The thing upper most to political leadership is the accomplishment of the common good, fairness, and given voice to the voiceless. Political leadership is not limited to the ruling elites that manage the affairs of a territory. It embraces the totality of the political class that has the capacity to manipulate the machineries of government even from behind the scene. The political leadership examined above reflects the Nigerian situation. This is given the reality that the country had had political leadership through election, appointment, coup d'etat and electoral fraud.

Nigeria has been described as a failed state. It is thus described mainly because the leaders have not been able to maximize the natural and human resources available in the nation to transform the country. Ogbeidi establishes,

> Indeed, it is a paradox that Nigeria, the world's eighth largest exporter of crude oil, a country endowed with many resources, still has more than 70 percent of its population living below the poverty line as a result of corruption and economic mismanagement. Pathetically, the logic of the Nigerian political leadership class has been that of self-service as some of the leaders are mired in the pursuit of selfish and personal goals at the expense of broader national interests. Consequently, emphasis has been on personal aggrandisement and self-glorification with the result that corruption has become a euphemism for explaining political leadership in Nigeria in relation to the management of national wealth.[102]

Nigeria at independence was seen as a nation with a prosperous future; a nation ready to tow the lines of development and eventually become a first world country. All of Africa looked up to Nigeria as a nation that will bring hope to other African nations. But, unfortunately, Nigeria has been unable of becoming an industrialized nation.

The question is what exactly is wrong with Nigeria? Why has Nigeria been unable to accomplish this feat of industrialization after six decades plus? The experience of the Nigerian

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[102] Ogbeidi, "Political Leadership and Corruption in Nigeria," 3.

nation, reveals that the root cause of the Nigerian predicament should be laid entirely at the foot of bad leadership. The trouble with Nigeria, Achebe argued,

> is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian character. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land, climate, water, air, or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to their responsibility, to the challenge of personal example, which is the hallmark of true leadership.[103]

This indicates that the state of Nigeria's poor and pitiable socio-economic development has been a direct consequence of the actions and inactions of the leadership class that has managed the affairs and wealth of the country since independence. Leadership is what makes an organization or a nation. Without good leadership an organization or a nation cannot survive. Even when it does seem to survive, it will be surviving on one leg. Nigeria since independence has been grappling with leadership, and it is that inability to have decent and effective leaders that has given Nigeria a terrible reputation, and has retard economic progress.

Nigeria's political leadership did not begin with recent leaders but with our founding fathers. Zara E. Kwaghe and Chinyere S. Ecoma mention,

> In the bid to gain independence from the British, our founding fathers due to their inability to see and build formidable country where ethnicity and nepotism is shunned aided the British in the continual polarization of Nigeria. They became engrossed in ethnic politics and ended up with regional political parties that encouraged the further polarization of Nigeria. By 1960 after Nigeria gained independence, despite the promising start, Nigeria was soon engulfed by an intense struggle between the country's main political parties…[104]

The result of this dilemma is the continued deterioration of the country leading to collapse of law and order. The federal government due to lack of positive leadership and purpose for Nigeria did

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[103] Achebe, *The Trouble with Nigeria*, 1.

[104] Zara E. Kwaghe and Chinyere S. Ecoma, "Panorama of Nigerian Political Leadership since 1960," *Historical Research Letters* 32 (2016): 1-13.

little or nothing to save the situation. In the midst of this, Ojukwu accentuates, "The military intervened in a botched coup d'etat. This failure notwithstanding, power was handed over to a loyalist army. Ironsi, who inherited the leadership vacuum created by the coup plotters tried to restore peace and order but at long last failed in his interpretation of the term Nigeria."[105] The balkanization of Nigeria has continued today due to poor and parochial government leaders. The inability of the leaders to be forthright and honest is encumbering the development of the country in all ramifications.

Furthermore, the founding leaders of Nigeria lacked foresight. They never thought of the best system of government that will work for Nigeria. They rather adopted the parliamentary system which was inherited from the colonizers without taking into consideration Nigeria's peculiar situation, and what will promote the development of the country. Our founding fathers consequently, accelerated and deepened the division by the colonizers, and failed to give the young nation positive directions that will enable it to stand firm. Their interest was how to consolidate power in their various regions and at the same time struggling to control the center. To be in charge of the center means to control the nation's wealth and resources. Max Siollun buttresses,

> The founding fathers lack of well- defined vision and purpose for Nigeria was further manifested in the attitude they displayed before and after independence. They were suspicious of each other. They never trusted themselves. This lack of trust emanated from the fact that they all had different insight of Nigerian reality. The leaders had no common perception about Nigeria. The Northern leaders feared Yoruba and Igbo domination while the Southern leaders feared that the Northern Region would use numerical advantage to suppress the south.[106]

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[105] Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu, *Because I Am Involved* (Ibadan, Nigeria: Spectrum Books, 1989), 20.

[106] Max Siollun, *Oil, Politics and Violence: Nigeria's Military Coup Culture (1966–1976)* (New York: Algora Publishing, 2009), 65.

This lack of trust has continued to bedevil Nigeria leadership from building a formidable nation. Nigeria is a nation where citizens always emphasis ethnic and religious rivalry this has debarred the citizens from coming together to form a strong political unit.

Nigeria is not the only heterogeneous nation in the world; but because the leaders are unable to put aside their myopic ideas, selfishness and differences, they cannot come together, and build a progressive and stable nation. The consequence of this irreconcilable difference is the inability of the country to rise economically, socially and politically.

Even though, political power has been alternated between the civilian and the military since independence and neither of the two categories that ruled the country has done better. Zara E. Kwaghe and Chinyere S. Ecoma assert, "Nigeria right from 1960 has not been able to produce good and quality leaders that had the nation at heart. The leaders led the country without well-defined vision/purpose; in situation where they had managed to state their vision for Nigeria they lacked the passion to execute it to the latter."[107] Leadership in Nigeria is devoid of positive vision and passion, without these two components leadership will not succeed. It is vision that keeps the leader on track while passion fuels the vision and makes it succeed.

Leadership crisis in Nigeria and how it cripples development cannot be evaluated without mentioning corruption. Even though, corruption has been explored above it will be pertinent to state that venality is one the serious challenges of political leadership in Nigeria. The negative impact of poor leadership on the nation's socio-political life is manifested in unmitigated levels of corrupt acts. This dastardly act known as corruption has impoverished the nation and its people, and has left the country and her citizens to wallow in abject poverty. This is in spite of

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[107] Kwaghe and Ecoma, "Panorama of Nigerian Political Leadership," 1-13.

the fact that the country is arguably one of the most endowed nations of the world. Clearly, corruption has become systemic, and has almost been practically institutionalized in Nigeria; this is buttressed by the failure of successive leaders to curtail it. Maitama Sule captures the leadership tragedy thus:

> I say this with no apologies and it is unfortunate, we have a large chunk of irresponsible people as politicians today. What we have today in Nigeria are job seekers. They are businessmen who come to look for their daily bread, they are not politicians. They did not come to give but to take away. They did not come to lead but to loot. And they are looting us blind. Things were not like this. Things have gone so wrong that the country is in a pitiable condition.[108]

Public leaders have led the way in corrupt practices. In effect, corruption in Nigeria has heightened irrational decisions which are biased and motivated by greed, squandering of resources on unsuitable projects, loss of confidence of the people in government and the development of cynical attitude towards leadership.

This analysis shows that leadership failure is one of the major problems confronting Nigeria. This is evident from the leadership of Nigeria since 1960 when Nigeria attained independence. Ogbeide supports,

> Obviously, as a nation, we cannot move on without looking back because a people without a history can be compared to a tree without roots. The fact is obvious that there really was never a golden age of great leadership in the history of Nigeria. The lack of competent, responsible leaders with integrity, vision, [and] high moral values has been the bane of the country. It is simply disheartening that Nigeria, a country blessed with natural resources and manpower, is now doomed with uncertainty where abject poverty, high unemployment rate, unresolved assassinations, looting and squandering of public funds, etc., all as a consequence of corruption, have become the order of the day.[109]

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[108] Maitama Sule, "*Revolution in Nigeria*," premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/235763-exclusive-maitama-sule-called-for-revolution-in-nigeria, 2017.

[109] Ogbeidi, "Political Leadership and Corruption in Nigeria," 21.

Obviously, weak political leadership has increased the misery of the people. Political leaders undermined the growth and stability of nation. They have damaged economic development, hinder the growth of democratic institutions, and impede the country's ability to attract overseas capital.

This research has manifested that the political leadership is not what it is supposed to be in terms of advancing the country. It noted that although the situation looked very bad, it is not beyond remedy. To accomplish this, there must be a complete change of attitude on the part of the Nigerian political leadership class because no matter how perfect or excellent the constitution or other instruments for ensuring accountability and checking corruption in the country might be, all will come to naught unless the political leadership class shows the political will to abide by and enforce them.

As **poor leadership** is a challenge to Nigeria, so also is **political instability**. Political instability is dominant in Nigeria, and has adverse effect on the peaceful and harmonious co-existence of the country as a nation. What is political instability, reasons, and why political instability is a challenge to the progress of the country, will be manifested in this subheading. Political instability is caused by numerous factors, and it has crippled the progress of the country in so many ways. The causes and the repercussion will be examined in this section. Political crisis has in many ways crippled the progress of the country, and has continued to eat deep into Nigerian political space, Rasheed Aderemi Raji and Elizabeth Ikeola Wahab observe

> The issue of political instability is a common phenomenon that continues to dominate the political terrain in Nigeria. Although Nigeria is regarded as the "giant of Africa," yet the country has passed and is still passing through several restless stages of conflict and violence. The process of gaining entrance into the corridor of political power is replete with violence and conflicts, resulting from rivalry and suspicions among the various

> ethnic groups in the country that have culminated in political instability across the entire country.[110]

Injustice and subjugation dominated Nigeria right from the pre-independence days. It is unfortunate that currently Nigeria is still been plagued by inequity and oppression handed down by the past colonial leaders. This situation motivates weak institutions and persistent struggle for political leadership which obviates political and economic progress.

Political instability "is a political situation in which things are likely to change or fall suddenly in a society. In a clear term, political instability entails among others communal violence, rural or religious insurgency, urban riots, coup d'etat and civil war as well as elites' disagreement over the distribution of power resources."[111] Political instability can lead to all these mass forms of violence.

> In the words of Ofiaga (1979: 4), political instability arises as a result of the inability of government and society in general to adequately address the grievances of the population or particular subsets of that population. The source of grievance can be internal, external, or political, depending on the circumstances. . . . Because discontent alone, however, does not necessarily generate political instability, individual mechanisms must be present to articulate the grievances and mobilize the aggrieved to demand redress from the government; as tensions mount within a society, the interplay of these factors can stimulate . . . political instability.[112]

From the foregoing, it is evident that the re-occurrence of violent conflicts always throws the country into a state of anarchy and an unstable political situation. The case of political instability in Nigeria is overwhelming because the country is busy pursuing shadows and not evaluating the nitty gritty of conflicts in the country.

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[110] Rasheed Aderemi Raji and Elizabeth Ikeola Wahab, "Trends of Political Instability in Nigeria: The Way Forward," *Nigerian Journal of Social Studies* 19, no. 1 (April 2016): 49-50.

[111] Raji and Wahab, "Trends of Political Instability in Nigeria," 51.

[112] Addis Ababa Othow Akongdit, *Impact of Political Stability on Economic Development: Case of South Sudan* (Bloomington, IN: Author House, 2013), 18.

Nigeria as a heterogeneous society in terms of ethnic, religious and cultural pluralism is prone to conflict. Over the past sixty years of Nigeria's independence, the country has been confronted with varied crisis and violence. These conflicts have affected the unity and corporate existence of Nigerians. Nigerians experience political, sociocultural/Religious, and economic and industrial conflicts. As depicted in this part, the persistence of political instability and violence in Nigeria stem fundamentally from, poor leadership, frustration in the polity, and the crawling or absence of economic progress.

Political dimension: The political dimension of conflict, has been infamous challenge to Nigeria's progress. This type of conflict is rampant in Nigeria and it includes such things as electoral conflict, inter- governmental relation crisis over resource sharing etc. This aspect of crisis will follow. Afegbua Issa Afegbua comments,

> Nigeria has a history of electoral crisis. "The 1964 electoral crisis" marked the watershed in the nation's political history. The political and electoral manipulation in the old western region escalated to other parts of Nigeria and led to a national crisis which eventually became part of the problems that culminated in the first military coup in 1960, which terminated the first Republic and later led to the Nigerian Civil War. While the First Republic collapsed as a result of factors arising from regional intra-party crisis, the second Republic too collapsed under the same circumstances.[113]

This is a clear indication that politics in Nigeria has been the opposite of what it is developed countries and Nigerian politicians in particular are still backward in terms of their values, such as unfulfilled promises, political corruption, greed, violence, tribalism, abuse of power, weakening of the institutions, and intimidation. The above factors are against the principle of good leadership which presupposes the process of social engagement between the rulers and the ruled

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[113] Afegbua Issa Afegbua, "Conflicts and Political Instability in Nigeria: Causes, Consequences and Prospects," *Journal of Social Science and Public Policy* 2 (December 2010): 12.

in the country. Due to political instability, the focus of leadership became parochial with the over-riding consideration for personal survival rather than national development.

Again, the failure of the political leaders to ensure good governance in the country has led to frequent military involvements in the politics of the country since January 15, 1966. S. Egbon articulates,

> Instead of the Armed Forces to defend the territorial integrity of the nation, they dabbled into the country's politics thereby failing to maintain peace and tranquility, which is their professional callings. The unhealthy intense struggle for political power within the political class and the military hierarchy on the one hand and between the civilian and the soldiers on the other hand are symptoms of an unstable political system in the country.[114]

The dabbling of the military into politics in the country introduced unpredictability in the political structure, and a clog to the economic growth of the country. It has been shown that the political dimension of the calamity is fueled both by the past military and civilian regimes. Both have been detrimental to the progress of the country. When the crisis will be resolved is beyond the imagination of the average Nigerian. This will continue to be catastrophic unless the right and just political attitude is developed by functional politicians. This would be possible if the existence of godfathers in Nigerian politics is abrogated.

Another essential factor responsible for political unsteadiness in the country is the issue of money-politics. This undermines the running of democratic system. Why money-politics is a hitch and mitigates the well-being of the country will ensue. The political class of the country perceives politics as a commercial venture where they can make money. Money politics aggravates rampant corruption, and declining trust in government. According to Aderemi and

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[114] Steve Egbo, *Political Soldiering: Africa's Men on Horse Back* (Enugu, Nigeria: John Jacob's Classic Publishers, 2001), 14.

Wahab, "Bill Clinton, the former American President, averred that in a civilized society, money is not a determining factor for elective post; but in Nigeria, the frequent political instability is due to the lust of politicians for money, as they see politics as a business where they can make money."[115] The aftermath is that the money that could have been used to develop the country, maintain the existing infrastructure, and enhance the well-being of the citizens is siphoned off and shared by the political leaders. This disreputable attitude of the political class brazenly inflicts undue hardship and misery on the people. It creates inequity and a hindrance for the country to accomplish its potentials in Africa, and the world as a whole despite the enormous natural resources with which the country is endowed. It has been demonstrated that money politics is not helpful to the country. It vitiates transparency and accountability. It increases hardship and corruption. It has deprived Nigerians of their potentials. Instead of Nigeria being the giant of Africa, it has become a laughing stock in the League of Nations.

Conflict like corruption has been prevalent in Nigeria. It has caused a lot of misfortune, and hindered economic progress in the country. Why conflict prevails, the causes, and the aftermath will be explored. Conflict is a catalyst to political uncertainty in Nigeria because those who instigate, mobilize, sponsor and arm the hoodlums and miscreants, are allowed to go scot-free. They are never prosecuted or tried in any court and if found guilty. They are never imprisoned or given commensurate punishment. Aderemi and Wahab establish,

> Some of the people who sponsor violent conflicts are the elites and powerful members of the society. The feeling is that these people are untouchables and their followers see them as such. Many of these sponsors go back to plan other rounds of such conflicts and violence, since they have never been brought to book for their abominable crimes. Moreover, the police and other security outfits have not been adequately trained to manage crises. On several occasions, the rioters are "too tough" for the untrained and

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[115] Aderemi and Wahab, "Trends of Political Instability in Nigeria," 54.

> unsophisticated police to handle in times of violence outbreak. Surprisingly, the rioters are often well-equipped and carry sophisticated weapons.[116]

The existence and promotion of "sacred cows," that is, members of the political class and their cronies, are a bane to the country. They plan and execute all kinds of opprobrious acts, realizing that they are above the law. The perception that they are above the law gingers them to do whatsoever they like. They groom and prompt the urchins to commit heinous crimes; including killing, burning of houses, churches, and business premises.

Political conflicts succeed in Nigeria because the judicial and other panels of investigation on civil disturbances and viciousness never had their proposals executed by the government. Most at times their findings are not made known to the public, and nothing is done about it. Aderemi and Wahab indicate, "Conflicts keep re-occurring in Nigeria, owing [to] the fact that the judicial and other panels of enquiry on civil disobedience and violence never had their recommendations implemented by [the] government. This often leads to political instability in the country."[117] The recommendations are not implemented because of the same sacred cow syndrome. This exacerbates friction and calamity in the country. Political crisis has caused a lot of harm in Nigeria. It has enabled destruction, burning, killing, maiming and displacement of people. It is unbelievable how many businesses that have closed because of undue struggle. This ugly situation creates unemployment and restiveness. Having stated what political disaster is all about, other dimensions of the cataclysm will follow.

Socio-cultural/Religious factors: Socio-cultural tension has been problematic in Nigeria. The colonizers also aggravated and contributed immensely to the fractionalization of Nigeria.

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[116] Aderemi and Wahab, "Trends of Political Instability in Nigeria," 54-55.
[117] Aderemi and Wahab, "Trends of Political Instability in Nigeria," 55.

The impact of this balkanization to the unity and economic growth of the country, and the overt hostility that ensues would be considered.

The proliferation of sectional groupings since Nigeria became independent is another source of tension and instability in the country. Inter- ethnic struggles over issues that border on public office and resource sharing take further coloration in the formation of ethnic militias. For instance, the Odua People's Congress (OPC), Arewa Youth Forum (AYF), Boko Haram, Bakassi boys, Massob, IPOB, and Ijaw Youth Forum. Their formation and goals merely reinforce the primordial ethno-political agenda of the ethnic groups they represent. Aderemi and Wahab support this claim:

> Nigeria being a multi-ethnic state, conflict and political instability will occur when the different ethnic groups perceive divergent views that their aspirations or goals cannot be achieved simultaneously. Hence, when there is inequality in access to the control of natural resources and political power, it is natural that there would be discontent, opposition controversy and political instability.[118]

These sectional groups instigate violence and abuse human rights including illegal arrest, detention and execution of innocent citizens. They engage security forces in armed confrontation leading to causality, displacement and destruction of property. With this type of dastardly act, the nation is plunged into poverty and obvious hunger. As noted, socio-cultural effect is unpleasant and gingers the country into destitution, and loss of able-bodied human beings.

Religious extremism: The religious dimension of the conflict is the fiercest and most unfortunate. It has many unwelcome and despicable consequences. Religion instead of uniting Nigerians has brought unprecedented division and violence. This research will investigate the vicious effects of religious radicalism.

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[118] Aderemi and Wahab, "Trends of Political Instability in Nigeria," 55.

Fanaticism and intolerance in some parts of the country become an extension of inter-ethnic, and inter communal conflicts. Religious conflict has brought the nation to her knees, and has caused much harm in the country. It has crippled the development of the country, and has resulted in the loss of lives and properties Agagu asserts,

> Religious uprising in the northern part of Nigeria, especially since 1998, when the country witnessed Matasini religious uprising notably Kano and Kaduna. Many other religious riots have taken place in other northern towns such as Zaria, Kafachan, Maiduguri, and recently Jos. The latest incident in 2010 in Plateau and Bornu states, where a group of religious extremists, who claimed they are against western civilization, broke into prisons and released prisoners was the height of lawlessness in the 21st century Nigeria.[119]

Religious extremism has caused much instability, loss of life, and property in the country. Religious fanatics kill people of other faiths recklessly and uncaring, and burn their houses. This makes living in some northern parts of the country very risky, and precarious. As indicated, religious riots gravely hurt the economy, and pull the nation backwards. It dislocates people, instills hatred, vengeance and acrimony. None of the above is beneficial to the growth of any country. It rather catalyzes vicious dissection and drains the economy.

Industrial action is rampant in Nigeria. It shows how dissatisfied workers are. It can be in the form of strike, slowdown or work to rule. Employees use it to protest against bad working conditions or low pay. It causes the reduction of productivity. It is the uncanny effects of industrial action that will be examined in this segment.

Industrial action promotes disharmony in Nigeria. According to Eddy's *HR Encyclopedia*, a labor strike "is a collective action taken by employees [of a company] to protest

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[119] A. A. Agagu and Robert F. Ola, *Development Agenda of the Nigerian State* (Ibadan: FIAG, 2004), 24.

against their employers—usually to demand better wages, benefits, or working conditions."[120] There are incessant industrial resentments by labor over unfavorable government economic and industrial policies in Nigeria. The contention is often the situation of service and official economic policies. Since 1999 until the present, there is hardly a year gone by without a major industrial crisis. Afegbua indicates, "The governments at all levels have very poor records of managing industrial disagreements and unrest, between it and labor unions in the country. The government even under a democratic dispensation lacks proactive strategies and skills in managing such crises until they escalate into uncontrollable violent levels."[121] Industrial action does not do any good both to the government and the striking workers. It slows down and even stops productivity and causes damage to equipment and materials. Often times it causes death, destruction of property, loss of job, and dislodgment of people. Overtly, it disposes people to hunger, impoverishment and abject penury.

As mentioned, there are various conflicts in Nigeria, and they have overwhelming adverse effects. It is the hostile, unfavorable and unfriendly implications of the struggles that will follow.

Foremost in the consequences of political instability is the inadequate use of natural and human resources that Nigeria has. This singular implication has heightened destitution, hunger, unemployment and economic adversity. Violent crises have resulted in a number of causalities, especially loss of human lives which has implications for the nation's economy as the killings have effect on the energetic workforce. Afegbua argues, "Loss of human lives has implications

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[120] Kayla Farber, "Labor Strike," in *HR Encyclopedia*, Eddy, accessed February 19, 2024, https://eddy.com/hr-encyclopedia/labor-strike/.

[121] Afegbua, "Conflicts and Political Instability in Nigeria," 12.

for the nation's economy as the killings have effects on the agile workforce."[122] When young fellows are killed, the economy of the nation is in jeopardy because workforce is totally reduced. Again, when the workforce is minimized, the overt consequence is that government revenue generation is affected, and to pay workers become difficult. Is either workers are not paid as at when due or they paid half which induces economic crisis.

Political unrest discourages both foreign and local investors. No business can thrive in an unstable atmosphere. Investors always want to invest where their business will progress and advance. Instability hinders investors from investing in Nigeria. Ajayi agrees,

> Incessant violent conflicts in Nigeria have also retarded foreign investment in flow and growth. No foreign investor will be encouraged to invest in an unstable economy like Nigeria. The atmosphere of relative peace, security and stability will attract foreigners to the country while insecurity and political instability will discourage foreign investors from investing in the Nigeria business climate.[123]

In this section, the research has investigated what is political instability, factors responsible and the consequences of the instability. As manifested, political instability kindles poverty in Nigeria and other African countries.

3.3 Economic Factors

In addition to Political factor, economic factor also stimulate poverty in Nigeria. The economic factors that instigate poverty and will be investigated include Globalization, and mono economy.

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[122] Afegbua, "Conflicts and Political Instability in Nigeria," 12.
[123] A. Ajayi, "To Revive NADECO against Obasanjo," *Nigerian Tribune*, April 2, 2004.

3.3.1 Globalization

Globalization has been indicated as one of the prominent factors to economic progress and advancement. The competitiveness resulting from the fusion of the world into a global village has brought overwhelming progress to world economy. Unfortunately, since the incorporation of the Nigeria economy into the global economy, the growth pattern of the economy has remained below expectation when compared with other countries of the world. It is how globalization has contributed to the economic challenge of Nigeria and likewise other African countries that this sector will portray.

According to Adesoye, Ajike, and Maku, "Many highly globalized developing countries have not been able to profit from globalization and are still facing the same problems they have been facing for many decades."[124] Maduka, Madichie, and Eze add,

> For instance, Nigeria had embraced globalization since the 1980s with the expectation that enhanced free trade, competitiveness, financial integration, foreign investment and technological advancement would ensure the achievement of rapid growth of the economy. Contrary to expectation, the growth pattern of the economy since the 1980s has been very disappointing with poverty incidence escalating.[125]

Globalization is often blamed for the rise of poverty and inequality in most third world countries and regions. Why this is so, has been a great concern among Nigerians especially among economic researchers on whether globalization is actually a key to economic growth.

To delineate the impact of globalization on the Nigerian economy, a description of globalization will be pertinent. The OECD indicates that globalization is the "dynamic and

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[124] A. Abolaji Adesoye, Emmanuel O. Ajike, and Olukayode Emmanuel Maku, "Economic Globalization and Economic Growth in the Developing Economies: A Case of Nigerian Economy*," International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management* 3, no. 7 (July 2015): 341.

[125] Anne C. Maduka, Chekwube Madichie, and Eze Anoke Eze, "Globalization and Economic Growth: Evidence from Nigeria," *International Journal of Social Science and Economic Research* 2, no. 8 (August 2017): 4178.

multidimensional process of economic integration whereby national resources become more and more internationally mobile while national economies become increasingly interdependent."[126] This entails that globalization involves integration, and motivates global economic policymaking. Accordingly, Albrow and King see globalization as "the process of international integration arising from the interchange of world views, products, ideas, and other aspects of culture."[127] This means in globalization the structures of economic markets, technologies and communication patterns all become progressively international over time. In spite of its international organization and system, globalization has negative effects on the economic development of Nigeria.

Globalization is not bad in itself, but it favors developed nations more. On the contrary, it has not assisted Nigeria, and other developing countries to progress economically, it intensifies and promotes poverty. The high level of poverty manifests that Nigeria has not profited from globalization because of mono-cultural export, and not been able to attract increased foreign investment and huge indebtedness. The absence of investment, and to owe enormously retard economic growth and escalates poverty. When a country is indebted, unemployment, health issues, and other social ills prevail as it is the case with Nigeria. Destitution, hinder some people from going to the hospital, and at times the hospitals are not properly equipped as a result of poverty and mismanagement.

Globalization is one of the sources of economic stagnation in Nigeria. The experience of post-independent Africa generally manifests quite clearly that like other developing countries, it

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[126] OECD, *Measuring Globalisation: OECD Handbook on Economic Globalisation Indicators* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2005), 11.

[127] Martin Albrow and Elizabeth M. King, *Globalization, Knowledge, and Society: Readings from International Sociology*, (London: Sage, 1990), 35.

is not catching up with advanced economies. For instance, as long as Nigeria continues to open up her economy in competition with all the other advanced countries in the globe market economic stagnation will be experienced. The situation will continue to worsen because of Nigeria's weak economic capacity. Ene Maria Igboyi asserts,

> The determination of petroleum prices by market forces had done Nigeria more harm than good, besides it is absurd to deregulate … a scarce commodity. This has made the independent marketers constitute a cartel that dictates terms in market. And like the government, the marketers had created artificial scarcity periodically to influence prices. The Nigeria economy is weak and dependent. The issue of deregulation and market forces has much to do with efficiency. It is vital to be handled by the private enterprise.[128]

The implication of economic inactivity on the Nigeria economy is shocking. It leads to persistent unemployment. It reduces job growth, stagnation of wage, and workers are laid off to save money. It reduces the purchasing power of the consumers. It does not help economic output, and has the devastating effect of declining sales and outputs. When all those are present in a country the aftermath is unimaginable poverty, hardship and economic crunch.

On the same token, the adoption of liberalization in trade and investment as way of integrating into the global economy is another effect of globalization on the Nigeria's economy. This situation opens the country's economy to competition with other stronger economies in the world. As a result, it increases the exploitative tendencies of the stronger countries. According to Azu, Dibie, and Ifeanyi, a study by Omolade, Morakinyo, and Ifeacho (2013) found that "trade openness relates negatively with economic development in Nigeria. . . . A unidirectional causality flows from economic development to globalization without such in reversed order and

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[128] Ene Maria Igboyi, "Review: Effect of Globalization on the Political Economy of Nigeria," *International Journal of Business Management and Technology* 4, no. 3 (May–June 2020): 65.

that trade partners appear to be gaining more than the country."[129] Liberalization has impacted Nigeria negatively, that Nigeria imports foreign goods, without having its own demanded and purchased by other countries in reciprocal manner, this leaves the country at a very huge disadvantage. It brings immeasurable hardship on the majority of the population, especially workers, peasant farmers, market women, and students.

Globalization can accelerate the economic progress of the country, if the government will agree to benefit from the experiences of other nations by following their examples within the confines of globalization. Our leaders should be proactive in the formulation of policies that will embrace total participation, and avoid un-wanton privatization.

Apart from corruption, political instability, and globalization, the sole dependence on oil is another cankerworm that has posed a struggle to the economy of Nigeria. The Nigerian economy is as unstable as the fluctuation in global crude oil price. The economy that solely depends on one product would be unable to meet the basic social and infrastructural needs of the people or develop like others. The sole reliant on oil as the main stay of the Nigeria economy is creating more hardship. It looks as if the discovery of oil in Nigeria is a misfortune and not a blessing. Why Nigeria is unable to meet up with her financial needs because of mono economy is the topic that follows. Elijah Oluwagbemiga states,

> The Nigerian economy continues to suffer recession due to its mono-cultured nature. This stems from the discovery of oil in Oloibori in 1956 and the period of oil boom price in the global market in [the] early 1970's due to the Arab-Israeli war of that period (Esekumemu, 2016). The huge gains from crude oil export were enough temptation for the Nigerian government to abandon other sectors of the economy. Prior to this period, other sectors of the economy were up and running, the wealth of the country was to some extent fairly distributed among the working class of these sectors. Suddenly, Nigeria fell

[129] Benedict Azu, Kashiari Esther Dibie, and Shedrack Ifeanyi, "Financial Globalization and Exchange Rate Uncertainty in Nigeria: A Band-Pass Filter Approach," *Global Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences* 9, no. 4 (2021): 52.

> into the oil boom temptation and abandoned other sectors of the economy for oil. Oil became the mainstay of the economy.[130]

The challenge and anxiety is that the oil windfall has been grossly abused and mismanaged that it would be foolhardy for anyone to rely on it for the development of the country. The country has got to a stage where there are too many greedy mouths craving for the oil money that it is not even enough to satisfy corrupt tendencies much less anything remaining for development.

3.3.2 Mono-Economy

Mono-economy, according to Victor N. Itumo, refers to

> an economy mainly dependent on a single product or resource for economic growth and development. The concept could further be referred to a case where any country depends on a single product sales or exports for its budget funding especially to the tune of 70% of revenue. Mono-cultural economy could also refer to the situation when a country depends on a basic product resource for overall higher percentage of national earnings and contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) Like Nigeria, the mono-cultural concept entails that, "The discovery of oil in 1956, and its subsequent extraction since 1958, over the past 50 years, has transformed the Nigerian economy from an agricultural based economy to an economy essentially dependent on petroleum.[131]

The repercussion of mono culture economy for Nigeria is that the economic system is essentially based on the existence of only one primary financial product. The economic life and existence of Nigeria depends upon this one product, and that is oil.

Mono-economy culture has adverse implication for Nigeria. This is because, Nigeria abandoned other sectors of the economy thinking that the oil industry could absolve every able bodied Nigerian. The impact of such a poor policy is unemployment. Oluwagbemiga explicates,

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[130] Elijah Oluwagbemiga, "International Trade and Nigeria's Mono-Product Oil-Based Economy: A Study of the African Catfish Aquaculture Industry" (master's thesis, 2017), section 1.2, https://www.grin.com/document/374054?lang=en.

[131] Victor N. Itumo, "Nigeria's Mono-Cultural Economy: Impact Assessment and Prospect," *European Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 8 (2016): 23-33.

> Due to the fact that the oil industry could not employ every able bodied citizens, jobs were lost in their thousands due to the collapse of other sectors. Policies to cater for this problem were expected to be promulgated by our policy makers as other oil producing countries had policies that catered for their common citizens … but Nigeria's case is different. Instead, the gains from crude oil export were shared amongst a few ratio of the large population which were mostly politicians. This apparently had a negative effect on the economy which in turn brought about abject poverty to [the] majority of the Nigerian citizens.[132]

If the politicians have used the gains of oil revenue to develop the economy, there would have been abundant job opportunities. But they chose to share the oil dividend among themselves and the outcome is dwindling economy that cannot gainfully employ the teeming population. Again, not only that those unemployed individuals have no income, they also face physical and mental health challenges. Unemployment increases crime, depression, low self-esteem and anxiety.

In addition to unemployment, Nigeria's dependence only on oil has the inauspicious effect on the government revenue. Clearly, Nigeria's realizable revenue from oil export has declined greatly. Nigeria earned more oil revenue in the past years when oil price was above one hundred US dollar. But for some time the revenue accruing from oil has reduced, and this has given rise to government funding crisis. Itumo agrees,

> Essentially, the decline in global oil price practically deceased revenue for a country like Nigeria that depends heavily on crude oil revenue. For instance, with Nigeria, crude oil production at 2.2 million bpd and oil price selling above $100, Nigeria made more in 2013 than in 2016 when oil price had gone down below $50. By implication, crude oil price halved from the price ending of 2013 and beginning of 2016, bringing about severe shortage in budget revenue. Nigeria has begun borrowing from both local and international sources in a bid to fund its national budget as reflected 2016 budget.[133]

When a country starts to borrow to make up her budget, it is always catastrophic. It puts pressure on the country. Workers are no longer paid their adequate remuneration as at when due. Some

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[132] Oluwagbemiga, "Nigeria's Mono-Product Oil-Based Economy," section 1.2.
[133] Itumo, "Nigeria's Mono-Cultural Economy," 20-33.

are paid half, and some are laid off. Families are no longer able to provide basic things to survive; like food, clothing, and shelter. It limits the ability of parents to send their children to school and take care of their feeding, health and housing issues.

Other than deficit in the budget, and the reduction of the government expenditure power, mono economic culture of Nigeria has motivated the Nigerian currency (naira) to be devalued, and induces the scarcity of foreign exchange. The price of oil collapsed world- wide, and this had a deep undesirable impact on Nigeria. This is because for Nigeria, the greatest consumer of Nigeria's oil, the United States of America has landed alternatives to Nigeria's crude oil this of course has left the Nigerian economy on its knees. The Nigeria currency the (naira) keeps deteriorating as against the dollar, and this has colossal impact. Itumo narrates,

> The impact of naira's loss of value had been enormous. Businesses which borrowed money to invest would have to pay more in loan refunds. The loss of value of the naira also affected the Nigerian stock exchange market which shed value of market capitalization over time as a result of the loss of value of various stocks….The public sector workers in Nigeria, under the umbrella of the Nigeria Labor congress have in 2016 asked for a pay raise as result of the loss of value of naira and their sustained argument that the current minimum wage of the nation at below one hundred dollars ($100) does not represent a living wage with which workers would survive.[134]

The loss of the value of the Nigerian currency (naira) heightened the scarcity of foreign exchange. Importers faced challenges of raising needed foreign exchange to import products which are crucial to national survival. Likewise, Nigerian indigenous businesses which rely heavily on foreign exchange to import goods suffer as a result of the scarcity of foreign exchange. This is caused by the fall in oil revenue which is supposed to be the profit accruable to Nigeria. The consequence of this scarcity is the reduction of importation of goods into the

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[134] Itumo, "Nigeria's Mono-Cultural Economy," 20-33.

country, and this motivated debilitating hunger, high mortality rate, low life expectancy, unemployment, uncontrolled crime, poor health care, kidnapping, increased insecurity, and shortage of infrastructure. Above all, dearth of foreign exchange is unfavorable to the economic development of the country.

For Nigeria to develop economically, the country has to be industrialized, revive other sectors of the economy especially agricultural. The country has to come back to cocoa, rubber, timber, palm oil, yam, cassava, groundnut, cotton, hides and skin as well as the farm settlements. This will grant Nigeria to be in a position as exporter of major agricultural products, and be self-sufficient in food produce, so that it can save the huge amount of money expended on importation. The reliance on oil, the consequences and possible solutions have been depicted. For there to be positive economic improvement in Nigeria, the old viable indigenous practice of the economy has to be revamped.

3.4 Cultural Factors

In addition to Political and economic factors, cultural reason also dwarf the progress of Nigeria. It is because of this that cultural factor as hindering economic well- being of the country will be established. Among the cultural factors to be evaluated are; inter-tribal conflicts, Marginalization of women, Laziness and Lack of Patriotism.

3.4.1 Inter-Tribal Conflicts

Nigeria is a country with multi-ethnic groups which are conservatively put at about 250. (Two hundred and fifty) It is worthy of note that after more than six decades of her political independence, the country is still being confronted with the challenges of national integration.

Why the spurious unity of Nigeria has been problematic to her welfare is studied in this subheading. Ogochukwu Michael Osakwe declares,

> Nigeria is a complex country in Africa with over 300 ethnic groups and 120 different languages spoken throughout the country. The issue of discrimination, based on "We" and "Them," negatively affect the socio-economic and political development of Nigeria. Since the day of independence, there has been the struggle for superiority and recognition among the various ethnic groups that led to the Nigerian civil war from 1967-70.[135]

This means that ethnic loyalty takes precedence and appears printed indelibly in the psyche of the country's citizens' more than national patriotism. This situation threatens the corporate existence of the nation as tension and conflict between various ethnic groups are like recurring decimal in the country. The ethnic groups have all seen themselves as a rivalry competing for power and decision making over economic resources. Currently, the country is confronted with deep challenge to peace and stability as a result of ethnic differences; this has led to insecurity, instability, poverty, unstable democracy and corrupt political institutions in the country. As expressed this forced unity is a clog in the wheel of the progress of the country. The re-evaluation of it will be beneficial.

Ethnic strife is not peculiar to Nigeria alone, other African countries are facing similar situation. But the case of ethnic dissension is common place in Nigeria, the types and consequences will be deliberated upon. Osakwe elaborates, "Many African countries such as Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Uganda, Somalia, Sudan, Burundi and many more have experienced series of conflicts that occurred between communities, ethnic groups and

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[135] Ogochukwu Michael Osakwe, "A Case Study on the Causes of Ethnic Conflict within Nigeria," (master's thesis, Siam University, 2017), abstract.

religious groups."[136] This establishes that ethnic conflict flourishes in Africa and this has compounded the problem of underdevelopment, in the continent.

The first type of conflict in Nigeria is intra-ethnic or tribal conflict. Tribal conflict involves warfare between different tribal groups. It is often within the same tribal margin. It brings about disruption and disharmony in the state. According to Ibrahim Sa'adu, "This is conflict within the same ethnic or sub-ethnic group living within the same boundary or different boundaries. Political, religious, economic issues and so on could precipitate such conflict."[137] An example of intra-ethnic conflict in Nigeria is the Ife–Modakeke, and Aguleri–Umuleri conflicts. Ife–Modakeke, like Aguleri–Umuleri, are from the same ethnic group, they are neighbors, and one can hardly set a boundary between them. They have the same cultural identity, inter-marry, have the same market and fetch water from the same stream or river.

The second is Intra-ethnic discord: This is described by Sa'adu as conflict "between two different ethnic groups living within the same geo-political boundary or different boundaries. Various issues such as citing of local government headquarters, religion, and marginalization and so on could cause such conflict (Adebayo 2006: 91)."[138] An example of such inter-ethnic conflict in Nigeria is the land dispute between the Jukuns in the former Wukari Federation, Taraba state and Tivs from Taraba/Benue States in Nigeria. The Junkuns are in Taraba State of Nigeria, and the Tivs are from Benue State. But they are close neighbors, and share certain things in common.

Ethnic rebellion, according to Johan Galtung, is "conflict, disagreement, misunderstanding whether violent, or otherwise between different ethnic groups. Ethnic conflict

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[136] Osakwe, "Causes of Ethnic Conflict within Nigeria," 2.

[137] Ibrahim Sa'adu, "Class, Ethnicity and Gender in Kaduna Government & Politics," *gco* (blog), February 10, 2016, http://ibrahimgco.blogspot.com/2016/02/class-ethnicity-and-gender-in-kaduna_26.html.

[138] Sa'adu, "Class, Ethnicity, and Gender."

arises as a result of common group consciousness for survival or quest to attain certain goal that are considered to be of great value and which is perceived as being blocked."[139] Ethnic discord encourages discrimination, disharmony, destruction, loss of lives, and deters economic progress and advancement. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* explains ethnic dissent as "a form of conflict in which . . . the ambitions of at least one party are defined in ethnic terms, and the conflict, its antecedents, and possible solutions are perceived along ethnic lines. The conflict tends not to be about ethnic differences themselves but over political, economic, social, cultural, or territorial matters."[140] Ethnic disagreement can be traced to mistrust, suspicion, selfishness, intolerance and ignorance. Ethnic misunderstanding is intensified when the state seems to be supporting and serving the particular interest of the most powerful or influential group while claiming to represent the interest of all. Ethnic discord has rendered Nigeria economically and socially hopeless. The inability to live together has caused much harm than good. The struggle for tribal survival has inflicted a deep pain on the country rendering one Nigeria almost a mirage and illusive. What follows is a brief search on the causes of ethnic disharmony.

3.4.2 Causes of Ethnic Conflict

Ethnic opposition in Nigeria is as perennial as the country. It can be attributed to many factors, as the skirmishes come in different guise and dimension. Some of the factors that cause the quandary are colonial legacy, boundary disputes, struggle for power and resources, struggle for citing local government headquarters or government institutions, lack of sincerity and fair

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[139] Johan Galtung, *Transcend and Transform: An Introduction to Conflict Work* (London: Pluto Press, 1995), 45.

[140] Tina Kempin Reuter, "Ethnic Conflict," in *Encyclopaedia Brittanica*, May 29, 2023, https://www.britannica.com/topic/ethnic-conflict/Types-of-ethnic-groups.

play on part of the government, manipulation of the elites in the society, and ethnic intolerance. This accordingly will be explored.

It is inconceivable to discuss tribal conflict in Nigeria without mentioning colonialism. The colonizers forcefully brought the ethnic groups of the northern and southern states to form the entity called Nigeria in the year 1914. The mixing together has been a source of confusion both when the colonizers were in power and when they left Nigeria. The aftermath of this amalgamation follows. Osakwe reiterates,

> The case of Nigeria circumstance with past event of colonialism distress has brought into existence hatred and clashes within different ethnic groups.
>
> As the case may be, the country persists and remains polarized along ethnic divisions. Lack of trust and discrimination has frequently characterized the features relationship of all the ethnic groups in the country, affecting unity, peace and stability of the country.[141]

The colonizers, in bringing the north and south regions of Nigeria together, never took cognizance that these regions are culturally, historically, religiously and economically distinct. The colonizers used their policy of divide and rule and clamped these tribes together. Osakwe remarks, "The entity called Nigeria is a forced marriage in which the people involved were not asked if they want to be one nation. The battle for supremacy has brought chaos among the ethnic groups since the independence of Nigeria, which also had led to civil war between 1967-70."[142] The bringing together of these three different tribes, Hausas, Yorubas, and Igbos by the colonizers instigated, and continues to stimulate inter-ethnic suspicion, residential segregation, antagonism, polarization, hatred, lack of trust, and power tussle. This has robbed the nation of true national loyalty or unity. As displayed, ethnic violence has led to damage of lives,

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[141] Osakwe, "Causes of Ethnic Conflict within Nigeria," 2.
[142] Osakwe, "Causes of Ethnic Conflict within Nigeria," 9.

excruciating hardship, lack of economic wealth, destruction of property and refugee crisis which are not fruitful and progressive to the country.

Other essential factors that cause ethnic conflict in Nigeria are resource control, boundary, land disputes, establishment and citing of new local government headquarters, and power. As noted above, ethnic disparity has not been beneficial to Nigeria, be it between the same ethnic or sub-ethnic groups within the same or different border. Resource control is the fundamental cause of all therefore it will be epicenter of this part.

Resource control causes a lot of conflict in Nigeria as the case between Adoni and Ogoni the Ijaw and Itsekiri indicate. Osakwe asserts,

> The truth is that oil and the succeeding revenues [have] been squeezed out from it, intense to this area which many ethnic groups profess their homeland, led to conflict in series between ethnic groups competing for the ownership of land in the oil rich Niger Delta area (UCDP, 2012). The situation has made many groups to organize and create interest groups for their own ethnics. This has contrast the flimsy relations in the southern parts of Nigeria and has led to circumstances that battle for land ownership, taxing the land or even amount of employees at the oil facilities were all possibilities clashes of issues.[143]

The conflicts have resulted in huge forfeiture of lives and properties. It has erupted vast division among Nigerians. Moreover, it has driven some Nigerians to recognize and identify themselves as members of their ethnic groups and not as Nigerians. Ethnic conflicts have entrenched persistent disunity, division and mistrust in Nigeria. The sad effect of this is economic disaster, overt poverty, hunger, destruction and displacement.

Disparity in the distribution of resources, and offices regularly have accelerated inter-tribal struggle in Nigeria. The tendency for the recurrence of inter-ethnic conflicts are high when

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[143] Osakwe, "Causes of Ethnic Conflict within Nigeria," 26.

groups perceive that they are being segregated, excluded, and marginalized from having access to what they consider to be their right. It can also be fueled whenever imbalance in resource distribution coincides with ethnic identity differences. Amos Alabi maintains,

> Inequality in the distribution of resources has often caused clashes in Nigeria, where lands, money, power and influence that are not in large quantities often cause clashes in three major ways, if the scarcity of the resources needed is not sufficient to go round the people, the unjust manner of distribution of the resources and the abject poverty among the people often stand as a tool for clashes in the country.[144]

Tribal or ethnic revolution is a major threat to international peace and security. It is often accompanied by gross human rights violations, such as genocide, and crime against humanity, economic decline, state failure, environmental problems, and refugee flows. The complexity of ethnic violent as revealed leads to tremendous human suffering. It renders people homeless, increases unemployment, and causes undue restiveness in the country.

Indisputably, ethnic or tribal struggle is not only caused by disparity in the distribution of resources, but strongly by poverty and unemployment among the local population. Poverty is provoked by unemployment in the midst of plenty. Poverty dehumanizes vast majority of the population which are always used to fuel trouble on the ethnic groups whom they see as being the cause of their problem. Osakwe comments that ethno-religious clashes in Nigeria are often caused by various factors, including "poor governance and bad policies that cause unemployment, underdevelopment and hardship. This transforms the country from a nation recognized by the international community as being a wealthy nation, into having a supply of those who are simply annoyed and free to battle and initiate clashes or stir up conflicts."[145] When

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[144] Amos Alabi, "Management of Conflicts and Crises in Nigeria: Educational Planners View," *Current Research Journal of Social Sciences* 2, no. 6 (2010): 311-315.

[145] Osakwe, "Causes of Ethnic Conflict within Nigeria," 30.

people are not gainfully employed, causing confusion becomes easy because of frustration, depression and annoyance. The many able bodied young men and women who are idol are ready tools and instrument for ethnic trouble. They constitute thugs to politicians, foment trouble, kill and maim people in the society. The focus has been how unemployment heightens conflict in Nigeria. The fact is when people are idle, they become easy and possible instruments for causing unrest.

The attention here is to present how the perpetrators of ethnic contention tremendously aid ethnic confusion. They escalate friction because the criminals or culprits go unpunished and unhurt. Ali Usman and Yahaya Garba posit,

> The Nigerian government paid lip service and fail to bring the perpetrators to book by not implementing the recommendations/reports of various committees and panels set up at post conflict areas. The failure of the security apparatus to live up to its expectations in combating the challenges of ethnic conflict is also a cause of persistent ethnic conflict in Nigeria. The security agencies in most of the time send to control these ethnic conflict disappointed Nigerians by taking sides with one side.[146]

It is unfortunate that the government has lackadaisical attitude in dealing with those responsible for conflicts. This has indeed increased the ugly situation because the culprits are treated like sacred cows. It has been deduced by this study that because the perpetrators are perceived as untouchables no matter the magnitude, and the consequences of trouble they go free. The fact that they are not dealt with commensurately gives them the audacity to continue their malevolent and mischievous actions.

The negligence of the multinational companies to their host communities is another factor that enhances violence in Nigeria especially in the Niger-Delta area. The seriousness of this

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[146] Ali Usman and Yahaya Garba, "Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria: Causes and Consequences," *International Journal of Scientific Research in Multidisciplinary Studies* 5, no. 1 (2019): 70-77.

essential feature makes it imperative to be given due consideration. Often, there have been clashes between the multinational companies and the communities over the issue of resource control. Johnson Osagie, Akinpelu Funmilayo, Adegoke Fred, and Ezeani Samuel assert, "Another crisis of big magnitude in the entity called Nigeria is the conflict between ethnic groups in the Niger Delta area and the multinational oil companies. These areas have not known peace [in] the past eight years. Examples of such conflicts include Obobutu vs Elf (October 1989), Umuechem vs Shell (October 1990), Uzere vs Shell (July 1992), and Ogoni vs Shell (1990 till date)."[147] The unfulfilled promises of the multinational companies have given way to anarchy, the blowing up of oil pipes, which cripples the economy, kidnapping for ransom. All these have made the region unstable and un-conducive, and there is heightened turmoil every time. This section has traced the causes of conflict. It has exhibited that Nigeria and other African countries have suffered immensely because of ethnic discord. It has made it possible for the distribution of wealth to be skewed. Tribal crisis has compelled marginalization and labelling of people as outsiders.

The terrible consequences of tribal conflict and its devastating effects on the Nigeria society will be the emphasis here. Anywhere there is discord, hardly there will be progress. Anarchy, lawlessness, and segregation will become the fashion. This is simply why Nigeria is divided along ethnic lines. Ethnic conflict is one of the motivating factors why Nigeria does not have a stable form of government, and the cause of tension during election. Eniola A. Soyemi declares, "Ethnicity issue in Nigeria is at least one of the reasons the country retains and keeps

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[147] Johnson Osagie et al., "Causes of Conflicts in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria as Expressed by the Youth in Delta State," *Procedia—Social and Behavioral Sciences* 5 (2010): 83, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.07.055.

up its strange presidential rotation system under the unofficial system, the presidency seat rotates after two tenures between the major political regions."[148] This shows that ethnic conflicts have affected the government and the people generally and have resulted to political and economic instability. It has weakened patriotism, suspicion, lack of trust and true relationship among different ethnic groups in the country. Ethnic conflict also is a threat to peace, and security.

Tribal violence in Nigeria stimulates the use of illegal arms and ammunition and proliferation of bombs, dangerous weapons and explosives by the conflicting ethnic groups. Ali Usman D and Yahaya Garba note, "Ethnic groups purchase sophisticated weapons and ammunitions to protect or defend themselves from attacks from other ethnic groups; community members contribute money weekly or monthly to buy weapons before, during and after violent ethnic conflict."[149] The purchase and possession of unlawful arms and ammunitions motivate reprisal attack. It increases armed robbery, cultism and other forms of antisocial behavior. Ethnic retaliation leads to multiple deaths, especially healthy young men and women. It aggravates the destruction of farm lands. It causes violence especially against women, the aged and children. More so, it magnifies emotionally, physical injuries, rape, sexually transmitted diseases, maternal mortality, unwanted pregnancy, unsafe abortion and the use of child soldiers' to fight in ethnic conflict. Incessant attacks compel people to desert their homes and seek refuge in neighboring villages, towns, and other countries.

Another effect of ethnic crisis in Nigeria is that it makes the government to embark on diversion of funds to maintain peace in conflict areas at the expense of the demanding

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[148] Eniola Anuoluwapo Soyemi, "Nigeria's Ethnic Conflicts Are a Result of the Failures of a Weak State," *Quartz*, August 29, 2016, https://qz.com/africa/768819/nigerias-ethnic-conflicts-are-a-result-of-the-failures-of-a-weak-state.

[149] Usman and Garba, "Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria," 70-77.

developmental programs. Both federal and state governments spend huge amount of money to maintain peace, keep security personnel, re-build the ruins of the crisis, provide relief materials and pay compensation to the victims of the crisis. Usman and Garba assert, "Ethnic conflict in Nigeria since independence divert the attention of the government from embarking on meaningful development because huge amount of money have been wasted in the name of security vote to maintain or peace building in conflict areas."[150] Ethnic fight, costs the country huge amount of money. During tribal conflicts many things are destroyed, and government spends some money to re-build them. In doing this, the government disregards progressive projects that would employ, and better the living condition of the people.

On the same token, ethnic crisis gives the country a bad image in the international community and discourages foreign investment. Usman and Garba maintain, "As a result of the ethnic conflict in Nigeria, the situation has deterred away foreign investors, damage the reputation of Nigerians abroad and the image of the country at the international community, foreign investors relocate to other peaceful African countries."[151] A battered international image on account of incessant ethnic conflicts discourages inflow of foreign investment. No investor will like to invest in an atmosphere of uncertainty, and insecurity. For the fact that investors are scared to invest in Nigeria, unemployment has reached crescendo, and the economy is crippled.

Evidently, tribal struggle inspires loss of revenue both to private individuals and the government; ethnic conflict in Nigeria destroys the economy and the imposition of curfew which

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[150] Usman and Garba, "Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria," 70-77.
[151] Usman and Garba, "Ethnic Conflict in Nigeria," 70-77.

will affect the economic activities of the fighting areas. David Alao and Popoola Michael A. submit,

> Ethnic crises lead to loss of revenue to both individuals and government. Apart from the fact that violent conflict leads to the destruction of economic mainstay of some people like land and economic crops, it may also lead to imposition of curfew which will grind all economic activities in the affected areas to a halt. This will certainly result in loss of revenue to the government and produce its adverse effects on the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).[152]

Definitely, once there is conflict in any locality of the country, loss of revenue is a given. People no longer go about their normal business. This induces hunger, poverty and stagnant economy which may enter into economic recess. It is unfortunate that inter-tribal conflict is still a problem to the whole world and to Nigeria especially in the present century. The repercussions of ethnic dissension has been exhibited. The consequences are not profitable and stimulating. It will be exciting to curb this, because it is acclaimed that the world is a global village. With incessant conflict, is this global village not becoming a mirage? It will be valuable to contain this discord. What will be done to accomplish harmony is core of this subtitle.

Ethnic strife does not profit any person. That is why the first essential thing to be done is the practice of true confederation. This will afford the states, regions or ethnic people the autonomy to rule and control their resources. It is high time Nigeria decentralized the form of governance and be able to grant ethnic people autonomy to governor themselves the way that will assist them to systematically progress and realize their potentiality as a people. Alao and Popoola argue,

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[152] David O. Alao and Michael A. Popoola, "Ethnic Conflicts in Nigeria: Implications on Good Governance," Academia.edu, accessed February 7, 2024, 1-20. https://www.academia.edu/5333881/ETHNIC_CONFLICTS_IN_NIGERIA_IMPLICATIONS_ON_GOOD_GOVERNANCE.

> True federalism should be allowed to exist. This will enable ethnic groups within the federation to exercise some control over their economic resources. It will also enable the people to have some measure of self- determination within the country. A denial of this may lead to frustration and aggression. If true federalism is operative a lot of issues such as creation of local government and competition over citing of development projects, which attract national attention could be effectively addressed locally.[153]

This agitation for confederation has been going on for a very long time why the powers that be have not considered it plausible is aching. A trial of it is encouraged as it will assist to stop incessant killing of people, destruction of property, and will help to minimize tension and killing during and after election.

Government should be cautious in the distribution of the wealth of the country. The resource of the country should not be shared with prejudice. No regions should be favored more than the other. Government must ensure that there is equity and justice in the sharing of the common good. Equitable distribution of the nation's wealth will go a long way to restore public confidence in the citizens. According to Rotgak Gofwin,

> If access to socio-economic and political resources in the society is universally guaranteed, based on inherent equal worth of citizens, ethnic heterogeneity may not trigger any serious conflict. But as long as life chances and access to important socio-economic opportunities are dependent on membership of a particular ethnic group, ethnic pluralism will continue to be a problem.[154]

Obviously, Nigeria government needs to have objective policy of how to share what belongs to all without bias, and without preference of one ethnic group over the other. The implication is that when people perceive that the state institutions can no longer protect them from or guard against injustice, there is the likelihood that they will recourse to ethnic loyalty where they hope

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[153] Alao and Popoola, "Ethnic Conflicts in Nigeria," 1-20.

[154] Rotgak I. Gofwin, *Religious Conflicts in Northern Nigeria and Nation Building: The Throes of Two Decades 1980-2000* (Kaduna, Nigeria: Human Rights Monitor, 2004) 1-209.

to get succor. Moreover, equitable distribution of the nation's wealth will go a long way to restore public confidence in the citizens.

In line with the above, to ameliorate ethnic clash, the Nigerian government and politicians should have sincere interest in human development. This will curtail ethnic discord. Alao and Popoola adduced, "Human capital development generates knowledge, understanding, informal rules, norms, and long relationships that facilitate coordinated action and enable people to undertake cooperative ventures for mutual advantage. This is expected to re-direct citizens' attention to joint action instead of dissipating energy on divisive issues."[155] This is laudable and commendable, if only the government will create enabling environment for stable academic calendar, create job opportunities for all categories of people and guarantee the provision of social amenities and development of infrastructure.

In addition to having positive interest in human development, the government should do all within its power to tackle security challenges, and address the issues of ethnic clash by implementing the results of the panels of inquiry. Alao and Popoola remark,

> It has almost become a norm in Nigeria, that the constitution of panel of inquiry into any crisis is always a window dressing. Usually, the reports of the panels are not implemented nor culprits punished. Implementing such reports will create confidence in the conflicting parties and serve as deterrence to future perpetrators of crisis. The nation needs to come off its weakness or rhetoric commitment to security issues.[156]

It is crucial to study the findings of the panel inquiry and punish the offenders.

This section examined what would be done to curb ethnic differences. It has manifest that the suggestions will help to minimize ceaseless ethnic conflict in Nigeria. The benefits will be

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[155] Alao and Popoola, "Ethnic Conflicts in Nigeria," 1-20.
[156] Alao and Popoola, "Ethnic Conflicts in Nigeria," 1-20.

overwhelming and inspiring. Loss of lives, and destruction of property will be reduced, and the economy will improved. It is a reality that ethnic conflict induces destitution in Nigeria, also, the marginalization of women is not left out as a cause of poverty.

3.4.3 Marginalization of Women

The discrimination of women in the economic, social and political spheres is a global phenomenon. The gravity and consequences of such oppression against women vary across countries and cultures. This marginalization is predominant in developing countries like Nigeria. It is how the discrimination against women induce poverty that will be the core of this heading. Even though, Nigeria has adopted the United Nation's convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in 1985 and similar local policies, such as National Gender policy of 2006, inequality still prevails as a result of cultural and other fundamental problems. Makama, Godiya Allanana remarked, "In Nigeria, it is observed that the womanhood is reduced to a mere infidel and a second-class citizen, hence, there is the commonality of general belief system that the best place for women is in the kitchen. This trend has brought about tremendous misrepresentation of women right at the level of the family down to the circular society."[157] It is because of this, that women's participation in the socio-economic advancement of the country is extremely difficulty. Culture hinders them from participating fully in the political and economic progress of the country.

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[157] Godiya Allanana Makama, "Patriarchy and Gender Inequality in Nigeria: The Way Forward," *European Scientific Journal* 9, no. 17 (June 2013): 115-141.

Marginalization, according to Collins, McFadden, Rocco, and Mathis, refers to "an act of prejudice against certain groups in formal and informal settings such as discrimination in job recruitment, promotions, and performance appraisal in organizations and stereotyping in social settings thereby keeping or placing such people in disempowered positions."[158] The empowerment of women in Nigeria cannot be attained without empowering them economically, politically and by creating an enabling environment that will assist to do this. Again, from the definition, it is certain that the marginalization of women in Nigeria is perennial. Women have been discriminated ever since the country was created.

Women have been marginalized in Nigeria because of her patriarchal nature. This means that it is male dominated. Because it is male dominated, it sets limits for the women. The country suppresses women, through its social, political and economic institutions. Makama echoes,

> The patriarchal society sets the parameters for women's structurally unequal position in families and markets by condoning gender-differential terms in inheritance rights and legal adulthood, by tacitly condoning domestic and sexual violence and sanctioning differential wages for equal or comparable work. Tradition or culture and religion have dictated men and women relationship for centuries and entrenched male domination into the structure of social organization and institution at all levels of leadership.[159]

Patriarchy makes it imperative that the men are trained for leadership positions while women are confined to domestic activities. This limitation of women to domestic affairs by the culture makes them feel inferior, and dependent on the men. The culture deprives them of essential things that would lift them out of poverty. Heidi Hartman vividly observes,

> The crucial elements of patriarchy as we currently experience them are heterosexual marriage, female child rearing and house work, women's economic dependence on men reinforced by arrangements in the labor market, the state, the numerous institutions based

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[158] Joshua C. Collins et al., "The Problem of Transgender Marginalization and Exclusion: Critical Actions for Human Resource Development," *Human Resource Development Review* 14, no. 2 (2015): 205-26, https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484315581755.

[159] Makama, "Patriarchy and Gender Inequality," 115-141.

> on social relations among men-clubs, sports unions, professions universities, churches corporations and armies.[160]

The effect of this is that women's labor power must be controlled by the men. This control is sustained by making sure that women are under- represented in socio- economic development and in politics. Having no access to political and economic power implies that women are not relevant in the public sphere, they function effectively only in domestic affairs.

Furthermore, the patriarchy nature of the country dispossesses women of land ownership. It is highly difficult for women to own, or inherit land in Nigeria. Overtly, the possession of land grants income and wealth, but this right is denied women. Mandy Jollie Bako and Jawad Syed remark, "Other areas where women are lagging behind men include land ownership and politics. Women are normally denied land ownership and loan-facilities for agriculture which is the major source of income. . . . This situation is blamed on cultural and religious norms, which tend to support gender discrimination."[161] The agony is that in several ethnic communities in Nigeria, women do not have the right to co-ownership even when they contribute to the acquisition of such properties and yet they are responsible for childcare. They are legally restrained from land inheritance, and are discriminated against when it comes to property rights. Adegoke, Adegoke, and Oyedele support this:

> The patriarchal culture has denied women's right of land and home ownership resulting in their low income, unemployment, poor education, and lack of access to credit facilities. In addition to denying women rights of ownership and inheritance from their husbands, some ethnic cultures treat women as property that are inherited by the

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[160] Heidi Hartman, "The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union" in *The Second Wave: A Reader in Feminist Theory*, ed. Linda Nicholson (New York: Routledge, 1997), 97-120.

[161] Mandy Jollie Bako and Jawad Syed, "Women's Marginalization in Nigeria and the Way Forward," *Human Resource Development International* 21, no. 5 (2018): 1-19, https://doi.org/10.1080/13678868.2018.1458567.

> husband's relations after the death of their husbands. Women who strive to own land or homes are frowned upon and face gender discrimination.[162]

This shows that women who are involved in farming and food processing, use the land at the benevolence of their husbands and their brothers. They have limited access to agricultural inputs. Again, because women cannot obtain credit facilities, they are unable to engage in the production of market lucrative cash crops. Women mostly engage in near subsistence farming that leaves them vulnerable to economic hardship. The inability of women to access credit facility makes it difficult for some of them to have good education which will the core of the next caption.

Education is another pertinent area where women are suppressed. Evidently, education empowers women, and gives them opportunity to be less dependent on men. It also grants them authority to have control over their sexual and reproductive health, often resulting in fewer births and greater spacing between births, which is both healthier for mother and the child. Unfortunately, some women do not have access to education that is believed to break the shackles of poverty. Makama upholds,

> In Nigeria, educational facilities are generally believed to be inadequate, and access, limited for many, especially girls and women. . . . This inequality has its root in the colonial system of education which was primarily geared towards meeting the manpower need to the colonial government that obviously alienated women from educational and economic opportunities.[163]

Lack of education has been a strong visible barrier to female participation in the formal sector. This is because they lack viable information, transformation and progress, and have a low social status. Moreover, lack of education impoverishes women and subjects them to statutory

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[162] Bolanle Felicia Adegoke, Oluseyi Joshua Adegoke, and Joseph Bamidele Oyedele, "Factors Influencing Women Participation in Home Ownership in Nigeria," *Property Management* 34, no. 1 (2016): 67-78.

[163] Makama, "Patriarchy and Gender Inequality," 115-141.

discrimination. The absence of sound education among women is also contributed by the culture. The role of culture in debarring women from qualitative education will be described.

Despite inadequate materials for education, cultural pressure also hinder women from education Makama emphasizes,

> The social pressures on females such as early marriages, and other extraneous factors as well as consideration of female education as secondary to that of boys and certain inhibitive religious practices in some parts of Nigeria are the major causes of high illiteracy rate among women. As the impact of teenage pregnancy and early marriage makes abundantly clear, girls are at a double disadvantage in educational access, especially in the north, where these practices are most widespread.[164]

The denial of information or education to women is possible, because patriarchy circumscribes girl's educational opportunities. Some Parents attach greater importance to the education of boys than the girls; this is evident when the parents lack resources to enroll all children in school.

This subsection has been able to delineate that because of patriarchal system, some families maintain that investing in girls' education is not valuable. The implication is that at times, some girls will be asked to drop out of school to get married. Early marriage or child marriage violates girl's right to education, and opportunity. The consequence of this cultural practice is that it establishes on the women inferiority complex from childhood, and influences female aspiration. With this, women are disempowered, and have no place in the economic ladder of the nation. They don't have the skill that will enable them be gainfully employed, and have a meaningful life. In effect, patriarchy impedes the economic advancement of women.

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[164] Makama, "Patriarchy and Gender Inequality," 115-141.

Not only are women discriminated and marginalized in the educational sector, they are also segregated against in the labor force. The proportion of women in the labor force is very insignificant. This is noticeable in industries and civil services. Makama accentuates,

> Nigeria women, like their counterparts, around the world, face a lot of discrimination that limit their opportunities to develop their full potential on the basis of equality with men. They are far from enjoying equal rights in the labor market due mainly to their domestic burden, low level of educational attainment, poverty, biases against women's employment in certain branches of the economy or types of work and discriminatory salary practices.[165]

As a result of their limited education, women lack employment opportunities. They are mainly involved in petty trading, selling wares in the market and street hawking in urban areas. Given, what some women do as labor makes it absolutely hard for them to advance economically and socially.

As women because of patriarchy are relegated educationally, so also they are politically suppressed. The numbers of women that participate in active politics in the country are few. Women are sidelined when it comes to politics. Even though, there is nothing in the Nigerian constitution that debars women from active politics. The challenge is that patriarchy interprets Politics as men's affairs. Oyinade, Daramola, and Lamidi describe,

> Party politics in Nigeria is still virtually an exclusive affair of men as only very few women were elected into offices of political parties despite the effort by some Nigeria women since 1960 to contest their role in the society. Only a few were appointed on significant positions: a pocket of them won elections. Since 2003 elections however, women's fate in politics has worsened, resulting in gender politics, a division between men and women, polarizing Nigerian politics into two camps: one dominated by those who want to maintain the status quo of societal tradition and the other who are pursuing the dismantling of the patriarchal societal structure.[166]

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[165] Makama, "Patriarchy and Gender Inequality," 115-141.

[166] Babatunde Oyinade, Ifedayo Daramola, and Ishola Lamidi, "Gender, Media and Politics: A Case Study of Nigeria," *Singaporean Journal of Business Economics and Management Studies* 1, no. 10 (2013): 25-34, https://doi.org/10.12816/0003799.

The act of downgrading women in politics is a waste of human resources given the number of women in the country. Even though, the number of women that participate in politics have increased, it is still not sufficient given the important roles they play in the society. The non-participation of women in politics, means they are unable to contribute to national building, and formulate policies that will assist in the economic empowerment of women.

The continued marginalization of women in all spheres of life including economic and social development, are mostly attributed to patriarchal culture and legislative gaps. This is a critical issue that demands urgent intervention because gender discrimination is another form of poverty that could lead to physical and psychological problems. It also hurts human capital and societal development. Despite some governmental steps towards equality, the glass is still only half-full: women continue to earn less than men, are less likely to make it to the top of the career ladder, and are more likely to spend their years in poverty. The implication of patriarchy marginalization is detrimental to women's development and the nation as a whole.

3.4.4 Laziness

Laziness is one of the factors that contribute to poverty in Nigeria. Some Nigerians are unwilling to put in the effort required for successful business. They prefer being spoon fed or to do things only when it is convenient. Laziness prevents them from going in search of jobs or proper utilization and conversion of brain power to financial resources. How laziness accelerates poverty will be the substance of this subheading. Laziness is a disinclination "to activity or exertion," despite having the ability to act or to exert oneself.[167] The agonizing side of indolence

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[167] *Merrian-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. (2008), s.v. "lazy."

is that sluggish people are unwilling to do a task; they lack the motivation to accomplish any assignment, but they want to have the basic things of life.

Laziness has rendered some individuals, families and groups poor. Laziness at times causes economic meltdown and crisis. It aggravates the problem of refugees and migrants, and even motivates food shortage. Lethargy, gives room for some people to depend on one person for their needs. Chimobi Ucha mentions,

> Laziness is a common disease which is virtually suffered by many Nigerians today, especially those from wealthy households. Everyone wants to be comfortable but they are not ready to work towards it. This often leads to greed where people will do whatever they can to keep the family wealth for themselves. In most families everyone depends on the bread winner, who works so much to keep the family going and when he dies the family is likely to become poor because of mismanagement of funds. In most Nigerian families, the death of a bread winner means the death of the whole family fortunes; because everyone was depending on him/her to provide everything.[168]

Laziness erodes a person of his or her enthusiasm, self-esteem and energy. It makes people lose opportunities. It leads to dejection and frustration. Laziness causes people not believe in themselves, and not to believe in another person. A lazy person is a hopeless person. A lazy person is a burden to others.

Even though, poverty may be ascribed to laziness. But the growing chasm between the poor and the rich, and the dwindling middle class in Nigeria may not be entirely attributed to laziness. The gap is caused primarily by an imbalance of wealth distribution. This is because, there comes a point when after trying to find meaningful work an individual becomes discouraged and just gives up. George Monbiot expresses,

> Poverty is not a function of laziness, just like English is not function of intelligence. There are a lot of hard working women in the continent who wake up every day in the morning, travel long distances (sometimes walk) to work, do hard physical labor. If hard

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[168] Ucha, "Poverty in Nigeria." 45-56.

> work was a measure of success, most of these women would have long be out of poverty, unfortunately they are not. Poverty is a structural issue that fails to capitalize on society's hard work.[169]

In effect, poverty is not a function of laziness only; it is function of lack of will by elites. It is a system and designed failure. The structure is in such a way that it benefits and maximizes return to a chosen few elites and gives minimum return to those who do hard physical labor. In general, most Nigerians are not lazy, the system has made it unbearable for them. Many have the required education and skill but they are not employed not because they are not searching for job, but because jobs are non-existent.

3.4.5 Lack of Patriotism

Nigeria has failed to progress socially and economically. Part of the reason for this is that Nigeria lacks patriotic leaders and citizens who have the aspiration to move the country forward toward a good development plan and its implementation. Many Nigerians are patriotic, but they have not been given the opportunity to serve the country. Why lack of patriotism is a task will studied with enthusiasm. Usman Ibrahim declares,

> Nigeria always is good in preparing accurate, sound and efficient plans and policies of moving itself forward, but lacks the necessary ingredients of implementing its policies due to its lack of patriots leaders and personnel. Even though individuals are naturally self-centered but Nigerian citizens are worse than that, because they come to power to be served not to serve and to take not to give.[170]

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[169] Amajida, "Is It Appropriate to Consider Poor People Lazy?", Medium, July 10, 2021, Medium.com/@amajidameilia/is-it-appropriate-to-consider-poor-people-lazy-aa4a58114063.

[170] Usman Ibrahim, "Lack of Patriots and Patriotism among Nigerian Citizens as a Factor that Hinder Nigerian Progress," Academia.edu, November 2019, 12-16, https://www.academia.edu/43780749/Lack_of_patriotm_among_Nigerian_Citizens_as_a_Factor_that_Hinder_Nigerian_progress.

This happens because unpatriotic Nigerians have no feelings or love for the country and the citizens. They lack devotion, support, loyalty, allegiance and commitment to the country. Unpatriotic citizens prefer to be corrupt, embezzle public property, engage in money laundering, and impoverish the country. They have no will power and pride to promote, and sacrifice for the country, and what it stands for. Causing disunity among citizens is their habitat. A lack of patriotism among some Nigerians stimulates backwardness and destruction. This lack of patriotism can be deciphered in the form of prebendalism, brain drain, concentration on politics and negative attitude towards made in Nigeria goods. Prebendalism as form of economic limitation follows.

3.4.6 Prebendalism

Prebendalism as lack of patriotism obstructs the progress of Nigeria. It has limited the economic advancement of the country. It has made some elected government officials to think that they are the only ones entitled to the resources of the country. Prebendalism, has encouraged functional politicians to loot government property with impunity. Why this is the case is worrisome and is to be probed.

Elected Nigerian leaders and public office holders feel they have right to a share of government revenues, and they use them to benefit supporters, cronies, co-religionists, and members of their ethnic group. Richard Joseph affirms,

> Occupants of public office at all levels in Nigeria feel that their positions entitle them to unbridled access to public resources with which they not only satisfy their own materials needs but also service the needs or wants of subaltern clients. This kind of criminal diversion of public resources for selfish private ends starved the polity of funds for

> development, increased poverty and inequality, and intensifies an unhealthy rivalry and competition for public office that triggered pervasive instability.[171]

The inability of public office holders in Nigeria, to distinguish between their own properties, and that of the government have been a clog in the wheel of progress in Nigeria. It affords them the opportunity to personalize the wealth of the country at the expense of the populace. From the foregoing, Prebendalism, has crippled the provision of efficient public services, and the development of infrastructure in Nigeria. It has increased the horror known as poverty, and has left indelible sorrow and distress in the heart of many Nigerians.

Lack of patriotism among Nigerians is also manifested by brain drain. Brain drain is one of the most destructive problems of Nigeria. It causes underdevelopment, loss of task revenue and lack of skilled workers in Nigeria. At times, some Nigerians are exonerated from brain drain. When the society is unable to take care of her own experts included leaving the country becomes a viable option. Why this is a sustainable venture is the center of this investigation. Accordingly, Usman Ibrahim states,

> We must not forget that the lack of patriotism is another cause of brain drain in Nigeria. Sometimes, the reason why intelligent and skilled people in Nigeria; migrate to other nations is not because the government failed to do their job. It is because; most of the people who migrate are not patriotic or ready to serve their nation. They prefer doing their work in other countries than theirs.[172]

Brain drain has made some educated, skilled and highly talented Nigerians to move to other countries through immigration with the sole purpose of finding a favorable environment for themselves. Brain drain has impacted negatively on Nigeria; there have been loss of good labor and work force. It has exacerbated unemployment because potential entrepreneurs are staying

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[171] Richard Joseph, "Prebendalism and Dysfunctionality in Nigeria," Brookings, July 26, 2013, https://www.brookings.edu/articles/prebendalism-and-dysfunctionality-in-nigeria/.

[172] Ibrahim, "Lack of Patriots and Patriotism," 12-16.

outside Nigeria. Poverty is heightened because the economy is almost stagnant; the experts to advance the economy are not accessible. Brain drain does not always evince that Nigerians are unpatriotic. At times, some qualified Nigerians migrate to other countries in search of employment, improvement of self, friends, family and better conditions of service.

3.4.7 Concentration on Politics Rather Than on Good Governance

Concentration on politics rather than on good governance is another cause that portrays the unpatriotic nature of Nigerians. During elections, Nigerians pay undue attention to the tribe, religion, and the political party of the candidates. The essence of political power or authority is not considered. The candidates' pedigree and their ability to govern well are overlooked. This reason for this is unveiled as Usman Ibrahim expresses, "One of the outcomes of unpatriotism of Nigerians is that the citizens, journalists, political analysts, political commentators, etc., do not pay attention to governance, but on politics. For example, when an election takes place, they focus on who will be the next president, governor, chairman, etc."[173] When attention is focused on politics and not on good governance, people usually elect those who give them money and materials. When people of this kind are elected they have no time for infrastructural development in the country. Politics becomes the business arena to them, in which they invest money during campaign and election, while the profits come after getting power. The resultant effect is enormous hardship, and unspeakable poverty.

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[173] Ibrahim, "Lack of Patriots and Patriotism," 12-16.

The unpatriotic behavior of Nigerians is also shown in their negative attitude towards made in Nigeria goods. This has been a major challenge to the Nigerian economy. According to a resource from the Samphina Academy,

> It has been observed that Nigerians have a negative attitude towards made in Nigeria products. The government in its efforts toward patronizing Nigerian made products made Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) last year ban commercial banks from issuing dollars for the importation of selected products . . . to develop the local manufacturing sector, increase patronage of homemade goods and reduce pressure on the naira.[174]

Any country that depends solely on importation of goods and services, such a country is at the mercy of the exporting country, in other words, the exporting country determines the level of growth and development of the importing country. Nigerians dependence on foreign goods has hindered the country in her effort to develop her industrial sector. It minimizes the economic progress of the country, motivates both underemployment and unemployment.

Even though, some Nigerians are unpatriotic, however, there was a time the country boasted of patriotic leaders and citizens. During the colonial era, Nigeria had selfless leaders and citizens who fought tirelessly for the independence of the country. According to Matthias C. Isiani and Ngozika A. Obi-Ani,

> British annexed Lagos in 1861; in 1900 British declared separate protectorate over Northern and Southern Nigeria and then amalgamated them in 1914 into the colony and protectorates of Nigeria. In 1923, they gave room for Nigerians to participate in their political activities which created an enabling environment of creating a political party "Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP)." This party led to its National liberation movement intending to free their country from colonial bondage, people were known as nationalist and patriots on the other hand.[175]

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[174] Samphina Academy, "Impact of Foreign Goods on Nigerian Consumers," Project/Seminar Material for Economics, Samphina Academy, accessed February 7, 2024, chapter 1, https://samphina.com.ng/impact-foreign-goods-nigerian-consumers/.

[175] Matthias C. Isiani and Ngozika A. Obi-Ani, "Amalgamation of Northern and Southern Protectorates of Nigeria: Blessing or Curse?" *Ikoro* 13 (2019): 145-158.

These nationalists were patriotic and manifested that there is unity in diversity. This is because in spite of their various tribes, personal interest and aggrandizement, and cronies they fought with one spirit for the good of the country. In the spirit of oneness lays the power of the patriots to accomplish their mission. Despite these unpatriotic attitudes of some Nigerians, Nigeria has many patriotic individuals who are ready to serve the country and salvage it from the shackles of poverty, but they have not been granted the opportunity. When they are given the chance to govern things will change positively and the unpatriotic nature of some Nigerians will be effectively handled.

3.5 Religious Factors

Incessant religious conflict prevail in Nigeria. The persistent crises have ineffaceable mark in the minds of Nigerians affected by the clashes. Nigeria is a multi-cultural, highly complex country, shaped with diverse ethnic, lingual and religious groups. This identity made the country to be divided along the lines of religion, language, ethnicity and culture. Religious clash is not alien to Nigeria and the unpleasant effects are ineradicable. Religious bitterness and the problems associate with it will be expressed. According to Abdulazeez Balogun Shittu, "Religion, one of the numerous bounties Almighty Allah has bestowed on Nigeria is threatening her peace, unity and stability, as a result of misrepresentation, misapplication, and egoism. The situation has assumed such an appalling magnitude that people often wonder whether religion is a blessing or a curse to Nigeria."[176] Nigeria has a population of about 190, million people, it

[176] Abdulazeez Balogun Shittu, "An Overview of the Consequences of Ethno-Religious Violence in Nigeria: Implications for Muslim-Christian Relations," *Al-Asaalah International Journal* 4, no. 1 (2013):126-142, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316157808_An_Overview_of_the_Consequences_of_Ethno-Religious_Violence_in_Nigeria_Implications_for_Muslim-Christian_Relations.

comprises of almost half Christians and half Muslims, aside from other religions. That these two major religions, Christianity and Islam cannot live in harmony has painfully retard the progress of Nigeria.

In almost every society there is conflict. The causes of the crisis could be grave or superficial. But when conflicts are as a result of religious beliefs the consequences are grievous and dangerous. M. E. Uwadi, P. C. Ezebuilo, and K. C. Nwaonu claim,

> Conflict is a natural phenomenon or an inherent part of social existence unavoidable in human interaction in any society. It could be disagreement resulting from different interests, opinions, ideas, ideologies, attitude, orientations and so on. It could result as mere differences of ideas, interest, viewpoints or it could manifest in the form of violent demonstration, riot or war. Conflict becomes a problem when it is based on religious beliefs which manifest in violence. This results from the inability of the religious parties to respect and accommodate each other and failure to resolve differences amicably.[177]

As noted above, Nigeria has two main religions with a proportionate strength of followers which have been in competition for superiority. They have different signs and symbols, methods of conversion and other clear differences which have brought hatred among its members and the nation as a whole. Some of the factors that ginger antagonism among these two religions include: imposition of particular religious laws, mere invitation of religious speakers, utterances of the religious elites, illiteracy and a mixture of religion and politics.

Nigeria is a secular state, and no religion should be recognized as a state religion. In like manner, no religion should be imposed on the country. Unfortunately, the contrary is the case. In 1986, to the consternation of Nigerians, the then president of Nigeria General Ibrahim Babangida, without the approval of the governing organs of the Federal Military Government

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[177] M. E. Uwadi, P. C. Ezebuilo, and K. C. Nwaonu, "Causes and Implications of Religious Conflicts in Nigeria's Political System," *International Journal of Finance and Management in Practice* 5, no. 1 (June 2017): 23-32.

organized a mission led by a non-member of the government, the Sultan of Sokoto to formally admit Nigeria into the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). O. O. Familusi points out, "The move by Nigeria to join the Organization of Islamic Conference (O.I.C), initiated and amplified by Babangida, also almost tore the nation apart … Buhari/Idiagbon, shocked many Nigerians with this development. It was ironic that many of the key members of his government who were Christians claimed to be ignorant of such move."[178] Christians did not take it lightly, and did not see it as right. There was riot because of this unprecedented event. Christians surmised that Islam is now officially recognized as a state religion. Christians reminded the president that Nigeria is a secular nation and we don't have to be a member of any religious organization. This led to unrest, restiveness, destruction of property, loss of lives and economic impediment.

As if that was not enough, between the year 2000 and 2001, the Muslim sharia law was subtlety introduced in Nigeria, and was almost force upon all Nigerians especially Christians living in some part of Northern Nigeria who are not in any way Moslems, this led to conflict that claimed many lives and properties. Winner Iyanuoluwa Obayomi records,

> Somewhere in the range of 2000 and 2001 sharia law criminal code was presented in northern states for example, Kaduna, Kano, and Bauchi prompted dissent from Christians dwelling in those states they saw it as a dynamic Islamization of public life and discrimination against Christian minorities which led to inter-religious violence. This advancement prompted an enormous number of Christians to move out from the northern states…They carried with them stories of discrimination and atrocities, breeding strains between religious communities.[179]

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[178] O. O. Familusi, "Religious Politics and Its Implications for Sustainable Development in the Post-Independence Nigeria," *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa* 12, no. 5 (2010): 1-14.

[179] Winner Iyanuoluwa Obayomi, "Ethno-Religious Conflict in Nigeria: A Case of Jos Crises in Plateau State," ResearchGate, June 2020, 1-18, http://dx.doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.34645.65760.

This brazen attitude motivated conflict in the country. Christians perceived it as segregation, domination and violation of the Nigerian constitution. More so, it was understood as a shrewd manner of Islamizing the country. Above all, Christians were aggrieved because the year Sharia law was introduced in Nigeria was when a northern Muslim was the president. It was taken as an infamous attempt to slight, and to use naked power to subject all Nigerians to Moslem religion.

Religious struggle in Nigeria could be triggered off by mere invitation of a religious speaker. If the speaker is a Christian, Muslims will misconstrue it as a means of conversion to Christianity especially if the speaker is visiting any part of northern Nigeria, and vice versa. The event of 1991 is a perfect example. When Christians in Kano invited Reinhard Bunnke, a German Christian preacher to their religious convention. The Moslems in that state reacted inimically to the invitation. Basil Ugorji illustrates,

> A Christian community invited a German evangelist, Reinhard Bunnke and his colleagues to Nigeria to be a guest speaker at the convention. Being that majority of Kano residents are Muslims, they protested against the convention and the coming of the German pastor… the Muslims were angry and argued that it was injustice to allow a German Christian evangelist to preach in Kano. For Muslims, it was not just seen as a provocation, but an attempt to Christianize the Islamic city or present it to the outside world as a Christian city. This conflict led to the death of hundreds of people, internally displaced persons, and destruction of property.[180]

The encounter caused much debacle in Nigeria. Social activities were paralyzed, dusk to dawn curfew was imposed, peoples' properties were vandalized, houses burnt, schools closed, and businesses were ground to a halt. Hunger was heightened because people could not buy food. There was inflation. Some people died especially infants because hospitals were given skeletal services, some people were displaced and some relocated.

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[180] Basil Ugorji, "Ethno-Religious Conflict in Nigeria: Analysis and Resolution," *Journal of Living Together* 4-5, no. 1 (2017): 164-92. https://icermediation.org/ethno-religious-conflict-in-nigeria/.

Another essential cause of religious squabble is utterances by religious leaders or elites. Superficial, frivolous or even innocuous statements by religious leaders end up causing instability. At times religious elites talk or preach as to indict, condemn and insult members of other religions. According to Uwadi, M. E. et al, "In Yalmaturu Deba of Gombe state, a religious leader accused a Muslim of deviating from expectancy by marrying many wives. According to him, it was a sin. The utterance brought maiming and burning of houses. The bloody clash claimed over two hundred lives."[181] It is despicable that such harmless statement will lead to full blown crisis to the extent that some people died, and houses burnt. This is a manifestation that a sizeable number of religious fanatics are not schooled, educated or enlightened. They are illiterates, and easily believe what they are told. The fanatics are always ready to cause havoc because they are unable to process information, and incapable of reasoning analytically, critically and logically.

In addition to utterances by religious leaders, religious conflict is instigated by the fight against Western Education and ways of life. The fight against Westernization is prompted by Boko Haram, which is a Muslim sect based in the northeast of Nigeria. This Muslim group purported that western education, culture and civilization are evil. According to Mike Smith,

> The Hausa word 'boko' understood to mean modern secular education brought to Nigeria by British colonial administration, including agriculture, biology, chemistry, engineering, geography, medicine, physics, and the English language…was haram for Muslims to acquire, accept, learn, or believe any aspects of these subjects that contradicted the Quran and Sunna.[182]

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[181] Uwadi, Ezebuilo, and Nwaonu, "Causes and Implications of Religious Conflicts," 23-32.
[182] Mike Smith, *Boko Haram: Inside Nigeria's Unholy War* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015), 81.

Boko Haram teaches, believes, and upholds that Western education is forbidden; it is sin. 'Westernization is sacrilegious, indicating that western schools, legal system, democracy are all evil and should be denounced and forbidden by Muslims. Boko Haram's rejection of everything Western resulted in increased attacks, killing, maiming, and displacement of people. The focus of hostile attacks by Boko Haram are; the police, military, government institutions, Christian Churches and schools, and Muslim individuals who are critical of the group. Basil Ugorji comments,

> From 2009 to 2016, thousands of people were killed; property worth millions of dollars destroyed, trauma and pain inflicted, and tens and thousands of people have been internally and externally displaced. The victims of Boko Haram terrorism are both Christians and Muslims which, to a certain extent, characterize this conflict as both an intra-religious and inter-religious conflict.[183]

This Islamic sect Boko Haram, are feeling that British Colonialism and the creation of Nigeria had imposed an un-Islamic way of life on Muslims through all various layers of modern state, and therefore incessantly attack on other religions especially Christians.

Added to the nefarious activities of Boko Haram, is the inability of some people to separate religion from politics. This causes a huge dispute in Nigeria. The mélange of religion and politics has ruined many people. Often some elites perceive political statement as an attack on their religion. Uwadi, Ezebuilo, and Nwaonu exemplify, "Elites and other religious nationalists view religion as closely tied to their lives and any threat to it as a threat to their existence. These groups of people seek a political forum to hide and perpetuate evil so cheerfully due to their conviction. This shows how people find it difficult to separate religion from politics."[184] The

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[183] Ugorji, "Ethno-Religious Conflict in Nigeria," 164-192.
[184] Uwadi, Ezebuilo, and Nwaonu, "Causes and Implications of Religious Conflicts," 164-192.

indication is that religious disturbance enhances varying degrees of disability, indelible injuries, homelessness, and economic adversity.

Obviously, there are consequences in the aftermath of every event whether good or bad. Regrettably, the consequences of religious uprising have been grievous and disastrous to lives, property, economy and religions themselves. Abdulazeez Balogun Shittu explains,

> Going through memory lane may serve as a quick reminder in this direction. Religious conflicts, such as the Maitasine revolt of 1980s in Kano state which later spread to other parts of the North, the Kanfanchan carnage of 1987…similarly, the recurrent communal riots in Plateau, Bauchi and Borno States and other parts of the country, and the currently Boko Haram insurgence in different parts of the North have contributed to the strained relations between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria. Hence, attaining a true pluralistic society, where ethnic, social and religious diversity are maximized to the benefit of the people remains a mirage.[185]

The adverse effects of religious riots are multiple and indelible. It affects Christians, Moslems, Jews, Traditionalists, Spiritual people and members of other religions. Religious persecutions entwined with various degrees of control has caused conflict and bloodshed for millennia. Religious freedom is a basic human right, but it is under threat. The dreadful consequences are to be explored.

One of the adverse effects of religious crisis is low productivity, and this has hindered the progress of the country. Because of religious laws and crisis some people are no longer encouraged to work. They feel insecure and unsure of what next will happen. Working in an atmosphere of trepidation and tension has impeded workers from given their best and the aftermath is abject poverty. Uwadi, Ezebuilo and Nwaonu confirm,

> Religious laws and crises are so severe that it affects workers motivation in Nigeria. People are no longer productive because they are not in a safe environment. This is altering organizational goal and Nigeria as a whole is suffering the repercussion in the form of recession. Productivity is low in the nation and the masses are suffering…Even

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[185] Shittu, "Ethno-Religious Violence in Nigeria," 126-142.

> able bodied men and women who would have contributed to the productivity of the nation are killed in religious war. Violence leaves us with various forms of retardation and underdevelopment resulting from the destruction of lives and property.[186]

Low production intensifies hunger. People don't have enough products to buy. Above all, there is no money to enhance buying. Again, low production stimulates poverty through salary freeze or cut. It contributes to downsizing, which most often means layoffs, and this is not beneficial to the country's economy.

Religious conflict increases job insecurity. It is overt that Christians and Muslims find it extremely difficult to have any kind of fraternal relationship. There is anxiety and palpable fear when they work together. This affects the work force because there is religious bias in employing workers. Uwadi, Ezebuilo and Nwaonu submit,

> …Employer of labor of any of the religion prefers to employ people of their faith, thereby waving competency…Any slightest religious provocation or unresolved argument leads to loss of job. Most recent is the close down of Federal Government University in Dutsin-ma in Katsina State as a result of riots arising from accusation of employment of more Christians in the institution by the former Vice Chancellor. This incident has caused serious tension in the state. This perhaps is due to the fact that the two religions see themselves as being loyal to different Gods. If they see themselves as being loyal to same deity or God there would not have been much problem as it is experienced today.[187]

Job insecurity causes an unprecedented crisis in all industries. It does not guarantee employment stability. Furthermore, job insecurity acts as a significant stressor for employees. It leads to reducing and dismissals. When there is unemployment and downsizing, the economy is retard and poverty is escalated.

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[186] Uwadi, Ezebuilo, and Nwaonu, "Causes and Implications of Religious Conflicts," 164-192.
[187] Uwadi, Ezebuilo, and Nwaonu, "Causes and Implications of Religious Conflicts," 164-192.

Apart from low productivity and job insecurity, religious turmoil induces material losses. Whenever there are religious disturbances, properties are destroyed, stolen, burnt, and vandalized. Abulazeez declares,

> Unquantifiable public and private properties are usually destroyed in the wake of religious brawl. Some individuals, who are suspected of being sympathetic to a rival camp or perceived to be in one way or another connected to the cause of the unrest, customarily have their properties vandalized. Some rioters deliberately target social amenities provided for public convenience, which have nothing to do with their grievances. Street and traffic lights are vandalized at will, while government and private owned automobiles are set ablaze in some cases. Moreover, unspecified numbers of valuable have also been looted in the process by social miscreants …The hooligans usually take advantage of these chaotic situations to loot shops and other private property in the vicinity.[188]

The destruction of properties by scoundrels results in the disruption of economic activities of both public and private sectors. Business men and women desert the areas of conflict. Their relocation to other towns and cities often create setback for economic transaction in the affected areas. It is essential to observe that the losses incurred by some of the affected merchants are so huge that they find it difficult to recover from them. The merchants are forced to languish in penury for the rest of their lives. Inflation is emboldened because the few business people around the area of conflict begin to sell at exorbitant prices.

This section of the research examined what religious conflict is, causes and how religious crisis escalates poverty. It will be beneficial if the government, all religions especially the two Abrahamic religions, Christianity and Islam, politicians, and individuals work for peaceful co-existence, love, and religious tolerance for the growth of the country. Government should make education accessible to all in an affordable way and effort should be made in getting more people

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[188] Shittu, "Ethno-Religious Violence in Nigeria," 126-142.

employed. Dialogue is essential among religions in Nigeria as to proffer solutions to challenges than people taken laws into their hands by causing mayhem in the name of religion.

3.6 Environmental Factors

In this subsection, the attention will be on how environmental factors like flood, drought, climate change, and herdsmen instigate poverty in Nigeria.

3.6.1 Climate Change

The climate is changing and the effects are already being felt. The reality of climate change can no longer be doubted, or ignored. It has extensive damaging impacts on the environment. Climate change has caused a long-term change in the earth's climate, especially change due to an increase in the average atmospheric temperature. Rise in global temperatures have been accompanied by climate change. In Nigeria, there has been changes in rainfall, resulting in more floods, droughts, or intense rain as well as more frequent and severe heat waves. The planet's oceans are warming and becoming more acidic, ice caps are melting and sea levels are rising. As these and other changes become more unconcealed in the coming decades, they will likely present challenges to our societies and environment especially in developing countries like Nigeria. What is climate change, causes, consequences and solutions will be examined. Atio Rahman attests,

> Climate change is the greatest threat to human security and civilization, and it poses an enormous challenge for sustainable development. This problem has largely been created by the industrial countries, but the world's poor are the main victims of the negative effects of climate change. These various effects are being felt locally in developing

> countries. Climate change will increase global food insecurity, hunger, and poverty, and it may exacerbate migration and social conflicts.[189]

Again, according to Rasak Bamidele, climate change is

> a change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g., by using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties, and that persists for an extended period typically decades or longer (IPCC, 2017) The term signifies intrinsic dynamic nature of climate on various temporal scales, Such temporary scale variations should be monthly, seasonal, annual, decadal, periodic, quasi-periodic, or non-periodic.[190]

This description denotes that it is pertinent to study the length of time it takes the changes to manifest, the level of deviation from the normal and its impacts on the ecology.

Climatic change is caused by two basic factors, which include natural processes (biogeographical) and human activities (anthropogenic). Ajibola Abdul-Rahman Akintomiwa explains,

> Climate change is caused both by natural occurrences, and mainly by human actions on the environment. The natural causes of climate change is, as a result of variations in earth's orbit, variation in ocean circulation, variation in albedo of the continents, as well as variation in solar radiation. The human causes are, however, results of deforestation, air pollution, and poor agricultural practices such as bush burning, excess and wrong application of inorganic fertilizer, burning of fossil fuels, urbanization, industrialization, inefficient transport system, among others. Most climate scientists agree that the main cause of the current global warming trend is human expansion of the greenhouse effect-warming that results when the atmosphere traps heat radiating from Earth toward space.[191]

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[189] Atio Rahman, "Integrating Climate Change into Development: Multiple Benefits of Mitigation and Adaptation," in *Climate Change and Global Poverty: A Billion Lives in the Balance?*, ed. Lael Brainard, Abigail Jones, and Nigel Purvis (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2009), 104-118. https://archive.org/details/climatechangeglo0000unse/page/n5/mode/2up.

[190] Rasak Bamidele, "Conceptualizing the Relationship between Climate Change and Human Health in Nigeria," in *A Panoply of Readings in Social Sciences: Lessons for and from Nigeria*, ed. David Urim Imhonopi (Lagos, Nigeria: Department of Sociology, Covenant University, 2014), 249-266, https://core.ac.uk/download/162155474.pdf.

[191] Abdul-Rahman Akintomiwa Ajibola, "Climate Change: Causes, Effects and Solutions," Academia.edu, October 15, 2018, https://www.academia.edu/39019152/_PDF_CLIMATE_CHANGE_Causes_Effects_and_Solutions, 1-6.

The essence is that certain gases in the atmosphere block heat from escaping. Long-lived gases that remain semi-permanently in the atmosphere and do not respond physically or chemically to changes in temperature are described as forcing climate change. Gases, such as water vapor, which respond physically or chemically to changes in temperature, are seen as feedbacks. The first human cause of climate change to be studied is deforestation. Nigeria is experiencing a lot of deforestation. It does not seem that some Nigerians comprehend the danger associated with deforestation. It is the hazard of deforestation as instrumental to poverty that will be verified in this subdivision,

Deforestation has been scientifically proven to contribute significantly not only to the loss of habitat but also climate change. The effects of human encroachment on forests are seen around the world today especially in Nigeria. This is because people are clearing out trees for agricultural purposes or urbanization. Abigail Jones, Vinca LaFleur, and Nigel Purvis comment,

> Astonishingly, tropical deforestation contributes roughly 20 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, a share larger than the transportation sector. In order words, deforestation is doing more to deepen the climate crisis than all the cars, trucks, ships, and planes in the world…The major drivers of tropical forest degradation today are agriculture and logging-with agriculture (farming and ranching) accounting for 75 percent of deforestation.[192]

This is exactly the situation in Nigeria. Forests are cleared, trees are chopped and removed. The removal of trees causes soil erosion, flooding, few crops and desertification. This is hazardous to the Nigerian environment. If something is not done urgently to curb deforestation in developing

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[192] Abigail Jones, Vinca LaFleur, and Nigel Purvis, "Double Jeopardy: What the Climate Crisis Means for the Poor," in *Climate Change and Global Poverty: A Billion Lives in the Balance?*, edited by Lael Brainard, Abigail Jones, and Nigel Purvis (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2009),11-40, https://archive.org/details/climatechangeglo0000unse/page/n5/mode/2up.

countries, Places, like Nigeria will witness the extinction of wild life, and drastic temperature changes.

Fossil Fuels are another cause of climate change. Fossil fuels are releasing carbon dioxide into our atmosphere and trapping heat just like greenhouse gases do to the earth. This creates an insulating blanket that leads to more snowfall or rain during winter months which ultimately lead us to another glacial period where temperatures would be low. Fossil fuels have been destroying our planet for decades. They emit toxic gases that change the climate, which is a problem. Ajibola Abdul-Rahman Akintomiwa expresses,

> Carbon dioxide (co_2), A minor but very important component of the atmosphere, carbon dioxide is released through natural processes such as respiration and volcano eruptions and through human activities such as deforestation, land use changes, and burning fossil fuels. Humans have increased atmosphere $C0_2$ concentration by more than a third since the industrial Revolution began. This is the most important long-lived "forcing" of climate change.[193]

This significantly shows that when the emission from fossil fuels such as coal, crude oil, and natural gas pollute the atmosphere, they alter earth's natural temperature control process. The gases withhold excess heat in the environment rather than emitting it to space. The overproduction and entrapment of warmth raise the global temperature over time. The aftermath of withholding excess heat is injurious. It causes water pollution, health hazards such as cancer, and neurological damage. It takes enormous toll on our landscapes and ecosystem.

Transportation, industrialization, pollution and urbanization are examples of how fossil fuels heat our climate. With many cars on the road, the carbon emissions from these vehicles contribute to global warming in Nigeria, which in turn affects our planets ecosystem and weather

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[193] Ajibola, "Climate Change," 1-6.

pattern. As more people drive their own cars for transportation purposes, there are a lot more exhaust fumes being emitted into the atmosphere than before. Shaheer Ellahi affirms, "Greenhouse gas emissions from this sector primarily involve fossil fuels burned for roads, rail, air, and marine transportation. Almost all (95%) of the world's transportation energy comes from petroleum based fuels, largely gasoline and diesel."[194] These chemicals have been identified as contributors to climate change because as indicated earlier they trap heat within earth's atmosphere and cause it to warm up faster than usual –leading us down a dangerous path toward destruction that we may not reverse soon.

Climate change has devastating and universal effects, but its consequences will be felt more by the poor especially in Nigeria. Anthony Nyong attests,

> While the effects of climate change will be felt globally, reports are unanimous that the poor, particularly those in the developing countries who contribute the least to global warming, will bear a larger proportion of the adverse effects. Climate change will threaten sustained economic growth and poverty reduction in these countries as its impacts are increasingly felt in key economic sectors.[195]

Nigeria has been witnessing series of climate-related effects, ranging from agriculture and food insecurity, Water resources, Natural ecosystems and biodiversity, coastal areas and settlements, and threats to health. It is crystal clear that climate change is aggressively pushing Nigeria to wallow in extreme poverty.

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[194] Shaheer Ellahi, "Climate Change and Urban Challenges," *Illume Quarterly*, July–December 2012, 3. https://www.academia.edu/7158887/Climate_Change_and_Urban_Challenges.

[195] Anthony Nyong, "Climate Change Impacts in the Developing World: Implications for Sustainable Development," in *Climate Change and Global Poverty: A Billion Lives in the Balance?*, ed. Lael Brainard, Abigail Jones, and Nigel Purvis (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2009),47-60, https://archive.org/details/climatechangeglo0000unse/page/n5/mode/2up.

3.6.2 Agriculture and Food Insecurity

Agriculture is ultimately, one of the most perilous sectors to climate change, and most people in developing countries, derive their means of livelihood from agriculture. For the fact that Nigeria, and some other countries are in the low latitude regions, when the temperature becomes extremely warm as it is happening, it will negatively lead to the low production of cereals. Nyong affirms,

> In the low-latitude regions, where most developing countries are found, even moderate temperature increases are likely to result in declining yields for these cereals. Countries such as Chad, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, and Zimbabwe could lose cereal production…The net loss in yields will exceed the net gains, and this is expected to cause a modest increase of between 2 and 20 percent in the price of agricultural products in the short to medium term at the global level. Climate change could lead to a reduction in gross domestic product (GDP) of about 1.5 percent in many developing countries…[196]

Evidently, warm temperature is already having devastating effect on food production in Nigeria because of irregular and unpredictable farming calendar. Farmers, currently plant in the midst of great uncertainties, thus resulting in untold losses. Irregular and unpredictable rainfall and sunshine hours in Nigeria continue to take the toll on low level harvests of rice, maize, cassava, melon, yam, cocoa, cashew, oranges, kolanut, oil palm and other crops. Climate change cause pest and diseases to migrate while high temperatures smother crops. Pest and disease incidences which become varied and uncontrollable under extreme weather events continue to cause decline crop harvests especially that of cowpea, tomatoes, pepper and groundnuts. As low productivity has lessened GDP, so also has it curtailed the income of Nigerian farmers; thereby embolden hunger, and unemployment. Farmers are unable to access loan to improve their

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[196] Nyong, "Climate Change Impacts," 47-60.

production because they have no collateral. Many farmers are leaving farming in search of non-existent job.

Added to warm temperature is the fact that floods and droughts are rapidly increasing the anguish of Nigerians and Nigerian farmers. Drought in Nigeria is causing the climate to be extremely dried which causes severe water imbalance in the affected areas due to water scarcity and water quality. Nyong, observes, "More frequent extreme events like floods and droughts may lower long term yields by directly damaging crops at specific developmental stages. Heavy rainfall could precipitate soil erosion, resulting in substantial agricultural loss. Several studies in Africa have established a positive relationship between drought and animal deaths."[197] Droughts and floods have very negative consequences they stimulate the loss of human life, property, crops, livestock, lack of clean water, electricity, and cause health hazards. Both flood and drought decrease purchasing power, and productivity. They are impediment to economic growth and development. Supporting Takshilalearning.com/what –are-the- causes-effects –and-impacts-of-drought-and flood (posted on May 26th, 2021) states,

> High cost of relief and recovery will adversely affect investment in infrastructure and other development activities in the region and in some cases weaken the region's weak economy. Repeated flooding in an area will discourage long-term investment by the government and the private sector. Lack of livelihood, migration of skilled workers, inflation, and high price will adversely affect the economic development of an area. Loss of resources will lead to higher prices of goods and services and delay its development programs.[198]

This clearly shows how flood and drought are aggravating the anxiety, frustration, and depression of Nigerians. Significantly, both have lowered the income and economic power of

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[197] Nyong, "Climate Change Impacts," 47-60.

[198] Takshila Learning, "What Are the Causes, Effects and Impacts of Drought and Flood?," ISSUU, July 9, 2021, 1-11, https://issuu.com/online_education/docs/what_are_the_causes_effects_and_impacts_of_drought.

Nigerians and poignantly arouse absolute poverty. They have caused damage to infrastructure, loss of lives and loss of means of livelihoods, displacement of people and reduction in the purchasing power of the people. The amount of drought and flood in Nigeria, is threatening water supply, sanitation and disruption of school and business. In southern Nigeria like Imo State, whenever it rained the uncontrollable floods erode the soil, and the loss of life and property is a nightmare. It destroys crops, farms, lands and houses. The northern part of Nigeria is not left out of drought and flood. They feature prominently in some parts of northern Nigeria. This affects crops farming and harvests as well as livestock production. Flooded farm lands/wetland expansion cause arable land losses and reduces root/tuber crops harvest like potato and cocoyam. Elaborating, Adedoyin A. Idowu, Simeon O. Ayoola and Bolatito Ikenweiwe support,

> The crops planted in Nigeria include: annual crops such as cassava, melon, yam, rice, groundnuts, peppers, onion, plantain, vegetables, etc. The cash crops are: cocoa, oil palm, cashew, mango, coconut, rubber, cotton and other fruit crops like pineapple, guava, pawpaw, etc. All the above crops depend on rainfall. Where rain is abundant especially in the southern parts of the country, crops that require much rain are planted and in the northern part of the country, crops that do not require much rain are cultivated. Food production on the whole has not kept pace with Nigeria's population increase.[199]

As noted, climate change affects crop production in a number of ways, for example, uncertainties and variation in the pattern of rainfall, floods and devastating farmland. This has minimized food production in Nigeria, the aftermath are poverty and hunger.

A serious negative impact of climate change in Nigeria is the continued clashes between farmers and herdsmen. This conflict is caused primarily because of scarcity of water and drought

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[199] A. A. Idowu et al., "Impact of Climate Change in Nigeria," *Iranica Journal of Energy and Environment* 2, no. 2 (2011): 145-152, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228459699_Impact_of_Climate_Change_in_Nigeria.

induced by climate change. In Nigeria currently, the struggle has caused a huge social problem. Ajibola emphasizes,

> Due to the problem of rainfall variability, caused by climate change, herdsmen in the core north now push down south more frequently, in order to feed their cattle on farmers' cultivation. This has mutated over time in the destruction of investments and efforts, while also attacking outspoken farmers, a situation for which hundreds of lives have been brutally lost.[200]

This was not so decades ago, pastures were arguably available at reasonable level in both the North and South of Nigeria, and these clashes were non- existent. Evidence is seen from the changing nature of the nation's ecological zones. Hence, we see serious clashes result, because these nomadic herdsmen want to satisfactorily feed their cattle, often at the expense of farmers' cultivation.

The clashes of the herdsmen and farmers have resulted indisputably in enormous economic set back because whenever there is an attack, the farmers run away from their farm settlement, and find it difficult to return for fear of another attack by the herdsmen. This hinders sowing and reaping. It also creates an artificial scarcity of food. Inflation and devaluation of the naira in the community due to little availability of food resources within the community compared with money at hand chasing limited food items. Additionally, people are displaced because of the clashes, and the consequences are unemployment, and hunger.

Added to climate change causing hazardous drought and flood in Nigeria, it has unfavorable impact on the natural ecosystems and biodiversity. The effect is such that the people that derive their means of existence from both water and the land will lamentably suffer. Nyong elucidates,

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[200] Ajibola, "Climate Change," 1-6.

> Natural ecosystems are very important to the economy of many developing countries, because a significant proportion of its population derive their livelihoods from them. However, recent assessments have identified significant effects that climate change will have on both terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems…under future climate change, there is a risk of significant species extinctions in many areas…Climate change is also likely to result in shifts in species range, as well as in change in tree productivity, adding further stress to forest ecosystems.[201]

The implication of this is that the effect of ecosystems is causing the annihilation of endangered species connected with these ecosystems. It is also causing the loss of nature's balance, as well the destruction of fresh water resources. It creates a vicious cycle that accelerates further climate change, which impacts greater biodiversity.

Additionally, because of the effects of ecosystems and biodiversity, farmers, fisher men, and those involved in animal husbandry will lose their jobs and places, and will be expected to move which places economic pressure and burden on the society. Ajibola expounds, "Due to global warming, the consequences of the drying of these lakes include loss of means of livelihood of citizens that borders these lakes, who depend on it for farming, fishing, drinking and animal husbandry, as well as unrest and forced migration which places burdens on the new location they are relocating to."[202] This situation poses a challenge for humanity especially for Nigerians as human being cannot live in isolation, but in interdependence with the environment. Failure to protect the environment will have unpleasant consequences therefore we must focus to ensure that the protection of the Nigerian ecosystem is not taken with levity.

Other than the effects of biodiversity and ecosystems, climate change has impacted Nigeria's coastal areas and settlements. In Nigeria like other developing countries, some of the

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[201] Nyong, "Climate Change Impacts," 47-60.
[202] Ajibola, "Climate Change," 1-6.

visible development and infrastructure are located proximate to the coasts. The consequence is that extreme rise in sea-level, weather, and climatic variability are expected to affect coastal areas, and this will result in dreadful economic losses. Nyong maintains,

> In Africa, highly productive ecosystems, which form the basis for important economic activities such as tourism and fisheries, are located in the coastal zone. Forty percent of the population of West Africa lives in coastal cities…. By 2015, three coastal megacities of at least 8 million inhabitants will be located in Africa, which like most cities on the continent will consist of a sizeable proportion of slum dwellers. Sea-level rise will lead to floods in these coastal megacities, particularly affecting the poor, who are prone to live in potentially vulnerable hazardous areas. The flooding will ultimately displace a significant number of people and create environmental refugees.[203]

The risks of living in coastal zones are enormous, and climate change is escalating it. In Nigeria it is associated with natural disasters, which has increased erosion, storms, and waves, collapse of buildings, property and environmental damages. Furthermore, it has given room to the flooding of fish ponds especially those in the wetland like Lagos, and the resultant effect is loss of job and scarcity of fish. It disrupts tourism, marine transportation of goods, and recreation because people will not like to visit, or work in distressed areas; all of the above have multiple economic implications, and retard developmental process.

Increasingly, climate change poses a serious health threat to Nigeria, and other African countries. This is given the reality that Nigeria and other developing African countries are susceptible to diseases and health challenges. Nyong concurs,

> Africa is already prone to serious health hazards, and climate change will exacerbate these… In Africa, malaria is expected to expand its range horizontally and vertically, from its currently endemic range … Other health threats that will be exacerbated by climate change include malnutrition and the displacement of population, injuries, and mortalities. For instance, a global assessment of mortalities arising from climate change shows that Africa has a disproportionately higher share. Climate variability and change will interact with other background stresses and additional vulnerabilities such as

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[203] Nyong, "Climate Change Impacts," 47-60.

> HIV/AIDS and conflict and war in the future, resulting in increased susceptibility and risk of other infectious diseases (for example, cholera) and malnutrition.[204]

The effects of climate change vary over time and place. Specifically, climate change has devastating effects on Nigeria. It heightened poverty, increases food insecurity. Nigeria at present does not enjoy food security and therefore is more vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Economically, Nigerian farmers have limited access to credit facilities to replace lost farm equipment, farm crops, and livestock. There is also limited trades organizational opportunities (co-operatives) for supporting productive farming livelihoods especially in the farming communities and around inland wetlands and farm locations. Climate change has and the economic progress of the country. Climate change, if not checked, may dispose the country to emergency situation, and even extinction.

Even though, the effects of climate change are overwhelming, and will be around for some time. In spite of this, certain steps could be taken to ameliorate the menace. The aim of this segment is to provide some solutions to the problem of climate change. To be considered are mitigation and adaptation.

Mitigation involves Nigerians and other developing countries to reduce the burning of fossil fuels, and burning of bushes as this will minimize the flow of heat-trapping greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. Ajibola reports, "The goal of mitigation is to avoid significant human interference with the climate system, and stabilize greenhouse gas levels in a timeframe sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner."[205] As

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[204] Nyong, "Climate Change Impacts," 47-60.
[205] Ajibola, "Climate Change," 1-6.

noted above, when fossil fuels burn they emit carbon dioxide which heat the atmosphere, and that results in a lot of consequences that are unfriendly to humanity therefore if the burning of fossil fuels for electricity, heat, transport and other things that emit carbon dioxide are checked, the effects of global warming will be reduced. Mitigation is not the only thing that is advantageous, adaptation is also essential.

Adaptation entails human beings especially Nigerians realizing and coping reasonably with the realities of climate change. The essence of this adjustment is to reduce and prepare humanity for the negative impacts of climate change for instance; rise in sea level, and food insecurity. Nyong affirms,

> Sample adaptation actions include re-evaluating the design and safety criteria of structural measures for water management, developing groundwater protection and restoration plans to maintain water storage for dry seasons, and developing public awareness campaigns to highlight the value of rivers and wetlands as buffers against increased climate variability and to improve participation of vulnerable groups in flood adaptation and mitigation programs…development of coastal zone management, monitoring, and protection plans, floodplains; ensuring compliance with existing regulations of risk zones, floodplain use, and building codes, and the construction of coastal defense systems…raising awareness regarding climate change impacts on health, the development of surveillance systems for potential disease outbreaks, and strengthen national health infrastructure.[206]

In effect, people and societies have to learn and cope with changes in climate. Precaution is essential as to know the best mechanism to follow in the face of harsh realities of the climate. The preservation of water and food are paramount in humanity's dealing with climate change. The training of health personnel is of great value, and will assist immeasurably to cope with the unfavorable effects of climate change on health. Moreover, to assuage the impacts of climate change in Nigeria, it is necessary to provide foot bridges across road tracks/ roads and road

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[206] Nyong, "Climate Change Impacts," 47-60.

passages for use in times of flood. It would be also be pertinent to provide revolving drugs funds for meeting the public health needs of stakeholders in the communities. Enlightenment and campaigns on public health needs of the communities is encouraged. Above all, all hands must be on deck to abate the negative effects of climate change.

This section of the research has been able to manifest what climate change is, the effects, and possible things that would be done to ameliorate the negative consequences. It has been proven, that climate change is a global issue its effect is felt both locally and in the cities. But the effect is felt more in developing countries which is why this segment of the research explored particularly what climate change means for Nigeria and Nigerians.

3.6.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, the research focused on literature review that assisted to understand poverty from various authors and organizations. It explored the socio-economic, political, cultural, religious and environmental causes of poverty. This is essentially because without proper knowledge of the causes of poverty, solution will be illusive. The next chapter will study the method used in this study and the examination of the indicators of poverty.

Chapter Four: Methodology and the Analysis of the Indicators of Poverty in Nigeria

4.1 Introduction

This chapter evaluates the qualitative research methods, the interviews with individual persons in five geographic zones of Nigeria. It analyzes the research process in relation to how individual were selected, their responses and information about the research topic and organization. Moreover, it investigates the indicators of poverty and the implications.

4.2 Methodology

This research will adopt qualitative method. Qualitative research methods are described as "inquiry methods that are often used in various fields of academic disciplines, such as social sciences, management sciences and market researches among others."[1] They aim at gaining a deeper understanding of areas concerning human lives and behaviors, and as such asks the what, why and how questions. Qualitative methods according to Marshall and Rossman, are usually applied for "theory building rather than theory testing, hence being appropriate for exploratory studies"[2] Qualitative methods synthesize findings, and information collected and gathered from various sources, because of this, this exploratory study will use library and interviews in this research.

To delineate what is poverty, causes, impact and solution this study will examine in depth those questions relevant to the role of the library in providing accesses to readings and the

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[1] Norman K. Denzin and Yvonne S. Lincoln, *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 4th ed. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2011), 40.

[2] Catherine Marshall and Gretchen B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 6th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2016), 35.

benefits and values associated with those readings, specifically focusing on readings from journal articles and books. According to Carol Tenopil, Sanna Talja, Elina Late, and Lisa Christiana, "Library resources, journal articles, and books are important parts of scholar research and work life … scholars use the library's collection mostly to obtain articles for research and those articles help to inspire new ideas."[3] This demonstrates that the library will give this researcher access to scholarly publications from the library and elsewhere, such as open access sites and research sharing platforms.

> Library resources will afford the researcher what Fritz Machlup called the concept of
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> "benefits" rather than "value" this goes beyond information seeking or access to explore the benefits of the consumption and understanding information to the user. He describes two types of value of information: (1) purchase or exchange value, that is, what one is willing to pay for information in money and/or time, and (2) use value, that is, the favorable consequences derived from reading and using information. … In the library collection context, purchase or exchange value to the reader is almost always based on exchange value or time spent reading. The library bears the direct cost in monetary terms for access to content.[4]

This is valuable because the library will make available to the researcher books, articles and newspapers he cannot buy but are relevant to the research. Even though, this is not the first study to look at values (or benefits) from reading (or understanding) scholarly information. Some scholars used a variation of the critical incident technique to examine scholarly journal article reading patterns and place the resulting data into the context of exchange and outcomes value. These studies showed that academics read articles for many purposes and the reported value and outcomes of article reading vary significantly by purpose. For instance, most common principal

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[3] Carol Tenopir et al., "Benefits and Outcomes of Library Collections on Scholarly Reading in Finland," *Libri* 69, no. 2 (2019): 153- 168, https://doi.org/10.1515/libri-2018-0139.

[4] Fritz Machlup, *The Production and Distribution of Knowledge in the United States* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962), 62.

purpose for scholarly reading has long been research and writing and these readings were rated as more valuable to purpose.

Even though, the role of the library in providing access to scholarly journal articles has fluctuated over the years, with a drastically increased role starting in the mid-1990s as library electronic journals collections replaced printed personal subscriptions as the main source of article readings. In the dawn of the 2010s, however, open access and alternative sources of e-articles began to decrease the library monopoly on e-access. Still, the library was the main provider of e-article readings by researchers, and faculty members.

The library will afford this researcher access to E-books, books, articles and book chapters. This is because they are the traditional resources offered in library collections and still the most likely to be obtained from the library. E-book use from the library is increasingly over time as collections grow, although inconsistently among different users. Ashcroft describes,

> Although e-books have been a growing part of library collections for nearly two decades, and, in spite of both the dramatic switch to ejournals and a robust consumer market for leisure books reading, library users have been slower to adopt library e-books than many expected. Liberians are advised that more outreach and education about their e-book collections are needed. When specifically asked, most scholars in an academic research library say that scholarly e-books collections have value to their work, in spite of relatively low rates of use.[5]

The library contributions to this research is not limited to the accessibility of books, book chapters and e-books but include readings from institutional repositories and webs. Tenopir et al. observe,

> Libraries expend much effort in building and making discoverable repositories that include articles and other materials authored by their communities and patrons. Library link resolvers and authentication protocols seamlessly link searchers from web search

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[5] Linda Ashcroft, "Ebooks in Libraries: An Overview of the Current Situation," *Library Management* 32, no. 6/7 (2011): 17-21, https://doi.org/10.1108/01435121111158547.

> engines such as Google or Google scholar to full texts of articles held by a library subscription, so that to the affiliated user it may appear that they were able to view the text from the web without the library's involvement.[6]

Even though the library does not have a monopoly on scholarly information in our increasingly e-connect world, the library has assisted this researcher to access vital information regarding poverty. It has helped to generate new ideas and concepts about poverty. It has afforded the researcher the opportunity to read many authors and to be able to analyze their opinions, rather than relying and trusting on the ideas of single individual. Other than library research, this researcher will make use of interview.

Qualitative research interview is defined as "an attempt to understand the world from the subjects' point of view, to unfold the meaning of peoples' experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations."[7] Qualitative research interview helps participants to explain and describe things in their own words, rather than with restrictions. Every opportunity that would elicit information from the participants without putting them under pressure was explored during this research interviews.

Semi-Structured Interviews: The study applied a semi-structured interview approach, because it gives validity and credibility, especially when people differently say the same thing about a particular issue or concept. Kvale noted that a semi-structured interview "gives researchers more opportunity to probe for more details on a given theme or topic, as well as helping to explore the ideas and themes generated by participants."[8] What matters is to understand the actors' point of view, perspective, worldview and subjective meanings and

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[6] Tenopir et al., "Benefits and Outcomes of Library Collections," 153-168.

[7] Steinar Kvale, *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1996), 9.

[8] Kvale, *Interviews*, 9.

experiences attached to a particular situation. Based on this, qualitative research interviews employ the use of open-ended questions that allow for more probing, which is appropriate for exploratory studies in the investigation of poverty in Nigeria.

The interviews were conducted during the months of February through July 2022. A total of twenty-five interviews were conducted with church leaders, those in the academia, market men and women, farmers, and youth. Church leaders were interviewed because they are the voice of the voiceless, and have been helping tremendously to combat poverty in Nigeria. Some of have special organs they use to help the poor. (U-Care) (JDPC). Those in the academia were interviewed because they have done works on poverty. Market men, women and farmers were also interviewed, because they experience poverty in its raw state. If they don't go to the market daily and sell their wares they will starve. They live from hand to mouth. Above all, their children who have completed their education at various levels still depend on them because they are unemployed, and cannot fend for themselves. The youth are selected because they are the people worst affected by poverty. In spite of their skills and education they have no job. The government does not make any provision for them. They have been put on hold by the political leaders. The rationale for selecting these different groups of people and organizations is to seek broad understanding of poverty, causes, implications, and how to combat it. The interview focused on the theme of the research project, explanation of interview method, and an invitation to those to be interviewed to inquire about the study and the study procedures.

To start the interview, the researcher first contacted the persons to be interviewed through their contact details, and informed them about the interview and the purpose. It was followed by phone calls, text messages and email; with accompanying message from the researcher's supervisors. While each interview took its own method, the protocol ensured that the interview

remained focused on the overarching purpose of an evolving research question. It helped to avoid the timely warning of that "interviewing people without engaging in some theoretical and methodological preparation…can end up with interviews that might lead you to more noise than data."[9] Most of the interview covered the five geographical zones out of the six geographical zones in Nigeria. Interviews were held in Nguru Umuaro, Ngor Okpala, Imo State, Aba in Abia state, south East of Nigeria, Amukoko in Lagos, South West of Nigeria, Ankpa in Benue North central of Nigeria, Rumuibekwe, Rivers State, South South of Nigeria, and Sokoto, North West of Nigeria. The geographical zones have been explained above. The greatest challenges the researcher had are security, distance, and language barrier.

How the interview was conducted: The study was conducted in full conformity with the ethical rules and guidelines on qualitative fieldwork research at Claremont School of Theology, and approved by this institution. At the operational level, the following key general features of how the research was carried out can be noted. The selection process for locations as well as participants for interviews; the selection of both date and time for the interviews; the mode of invitation; the purpose and the numbers for the interviews, setting out the standardized questions, the use of technical equipment like audio tape, reports and analysis for each interview. At the brief introduction, the researcher provided a description of the research project, an explanation of interview procedures and invitation for the participants to ask questions about the study and procedure; as well as issues of confidentiality and right of withdrawal. Participants were asked to provide explicit consent to be interviewed, and that was done.

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[9] Zeynep Arsel, "Asking Questions with Reflexive Focus: A Tutorial on Designing and Conducting Interviews," *Journal of Consumer Research* 44, no. 4 (December 2017): 18-23, https://doi.org/10.1093/jcr/ucx096.

The interview guide was semi-structured based on a mix of close –and open ended questions. The open-ended questions were used to maintain a balance between providing enough openness for the informants to tell their stories and enough focus to allow the interview structure to work. It consists of the questions to be examined in the course of the interview to ensure that some basic lines of inquiry are pursued with each interviewee. Some of the questions include: What is your opinion regarding this concept poverty? What are the causes of poverty in Nigeria? Corruption has often been mentioned as the core cause of poverty in Nigeria, how do you react to this? What are the implications/indications of poverty in Nigeria? What are some of the things that can be done indigenously to ameliorate poverty? What advice would you give to our political leaders to enable them realize that the resources of the nation should be equitably shared.

The researcher employed the help of volunteers from the different zones, to assist gain access to the participants. The interviews were scheduled at least five to six days ahead of time. To be sure of their presence, punctuality and to eschew incidents of no show, I sent text messages as reminders on the eve of the interviews re-affirming time and venue. The researcher brought together people who use a common language together (native or vernacular) Because of the diversity of dialects and languages in Nigeria, and the location of the people to be interviewed, the researcher used English language, Igbo language and Pidgin English. These languages are all medium of communication in Nigeria. The interviews took place during the weekends and in the evenings, because many people have to go to their businesses or attend to their farms. The shortest interview lasted about forty-five minutes, and the longest lasted about sixty minutes. I interviewed each participant once, and those that were unable to be present were interviewed by the phone.

For excellence and quality purposes the interviews were digitally recorded. Before the beginning of the interview, the participants were informed that the interview will be recorded and they acquiesced in to it. After the interview, the audio data was transcribed into text data. The researcher essentially edited for the purposes of precision, expunging words or clauses that are not necessary for the comprehension of the overall meaning of a phrase or sentence. The transcribed interview data generated about 200 typed pages of single line spacing using Times New Roman 12-point font. The transcribed data and the library sources formed the dataset for the study.

4.3 Data Analysis

Data analysis and dissertation writing started simultaneously following the researcher's return from fieldwork. Data analysis was done using Nvivo 2010, software used in qualitative data analysis. This software helps in the process of coding, retrieving, searching and capture of meanings. It helps in storage and organization of data proper management. Data was transferred into a file for the purpose of making electronic reference retrieval. The Nvivo was of great assistance in the editing and annotating information. The access to electronic data, made it easier to organize and arrange information into codes and themes for better, thematic and robust analysis. Following Creswell, this investigation employed three levels of data analysis (as shown) and manifests what is referred to as the first or initial level of analysis, which consists of transcribed data from interviews. (Generating codes) There is also the second level of data analysis that consists of coding technique, which comprises categories, sub-categories and basic concept. Finally, the third level involves thematic data analysis, which makes use of axial coding of themes.

Opening coding: This started immediately after the completion of data transcription and storage. Open coding involved studying carefully the entire dataset to know the basic concepts that first appeared in the conceptualizations of poverty by the participants. While studying, sub-themes emerged that helped to analyze, and segment the core issues raised by those interviewed focusing basically on the research questions. The evaluation centered on the major themes raised by the respondents for instance, causes, impact, indicators, and solution to poverty. Every response was coded properly.

Code System: The interview transcripts was manually coded by cutting and pasting text into a Microsoft Word document file created specifically for this purpose as electronic qualitative data analysis software offered little help with the main analytical work. I color coded data abstracts and assigned codes that emerged organically while examining the dataset. Throughout the coding process, I made reference to the entire interview transcript. Codes were clustered into related ideas using a coding matrix approach similar to the Miles and Huberman matrix strategy matrix chart allowed for a visual overview of codes, categories and themes derived from the interview.

The Factuality of the Data: The authenticity of the data manifests a structure for making decision as to how qualitative information is shared and utilized to other circumstances. (Pretty, 2004) In line with this, the study applied some standards to establish the authenticity of the data.

As stated above, this study engaged several people during the interview from various walks of life, and different geographical locations. (Clergy, academia, farmers, marketers and youth) This was evaluated as measuring up to the expectation and objective of the researcher. The adequacy of the data has been shown as those interviewed articulated their opinions which signified their own realities. Engaging the voiceless, poor, and considering all genders widen the

scope and perspective of the researcher. It may be of immense benefits, if some other African scholars may apply some of the notions of this data in their studies because its authenticity. They can modify and contextualize them as it reflects their circumstances. This study meets the standard as noted by Strauss and Corbin. It considered gender, status and experience.

There are significant measures that validate the reliability of data, for instance the study generated concepts, and showed analytically the nexus of concepts. Furthermore, there were proves that the concepts and the connections were systematically analyzed. From the evaluation of the researcher, this investigation is faithful to the set principles.

In the chapters before and that will follow, the researcher placed side by side the definitions, causes, implications, indicators and solutions of poverty in Nigeria from the library resource and that of the people that were interviewed, and analytically and systematically compared and contrasted them. There was excellent collaboration between the library and the interviews resources. They agreed on what poverty is, and blamed bad governance and leadership as the primary cause of poverty. Those interviewed like library resource lamented the adverse effect of poor leadership, climate, and how flooding, drought and erosion are causing poor harvest thereby intensifying hunger. On the implications of poverty, farmers and market men and women stated they suffer most, because poverty is more in the rural areas than in the urban areas. They moaned and groaned that God should come to their assistance. They prayed that their children should get employed to help alleviate the pain of suffering and hardship. In their approach to the solutions of poverty in Nigeria, both the library and interview sources highlighted employment, mechanized agriculture, and development of infrastructure as core solutions. On the one hand, the youth interviewed cried most because according to them corruption and bad leadership have put their future and potential on hold. It looks as if their

education is useless. More so, they cried that they still depend on their poor parents for practically everything. They advocated for less corrupt political leaders and fair and free elections. These points will be developed and buttressed by the researcher in each segment of the research.

4.4 Research Objective

The aim of this study is to examine the landscape of poverty in Nigeria through a qualitative and institutional perspective to understand why poverty persists in spite of the abundance of natural and human resources, and the reality of the diverse efforts to address it. For an in-depth analysis, the study will explore why the programs designed to fight poverty in Nigeria have been abortive. The research will assess the relevant social, political, and economic landscapes to explore the historical perspectives that have contributed to the increasing poverty trend and the role institutions have played in exacerbating poverty in Nigeria. By approaching poverty from a historical context and following the research objective, the research does not aim to present a mono-causal model or approach but will traverse through a plethora of trajectory in search to unravel a panacea to preventing the trend can be found in a historical process. While the study is specifically about Nigeria and takes place in the Nigerian context, it can provide helpful insight into similar political regimes and socio-economic landscapes in other parts of the world especially in Africa.

Research Design: The research design for this study is interpretive approach. It will explore, seek understanding and interpretative meaning from the existing literatures, interviews, reports and relevant policy documents which will be grounded with a critical analysis of findings using a theoretical framework.

Data Sources: The main data sources for this study were literature on Nigeria's history and institutions and interviews. The research analyzed literature on Nigeria's history, institutions, and political regimes within the study timeline and beyond; socio-economic and political factors responsible for poverty persistence; poverty trends; poverty alleviation programs, and relevant economic policies implemented within the study timeline. The resources analyzed for this paper covered the pre-colonial, colonial era and post-colonial era till date. These resources include books, peer-reviewed articles, magazines, newspapers, and internet publications. The interview approach was adopted because, according to Yin, it is the most dominant and most preferred data collection method in interpretative qualitative studies.[10] It will assist to highlight how corruption, bad governance, and poor leadership in Nigeria heighten poverty and how Nigerians feel about poverty in the midst of abundance.

4.5 Indicators of Poverty

4.5.1 Socio-Economic Indicators

Indicators of poverty are very essential to enable the powers that be in Nigeria to appreciate realistically the challenges of poverty and begin to find immediate and remote solutions. It is because of this that this subdivision will engage on the pointers of poverty. It will be explored from economic, and societal factors.

The economic factors include unemployment, lack of infrastructure, education, poor remuneration and migration.

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[10] Bedrettin Yazan, "Three Approaches to Case Study Methods in Education: Yin, Merriam, and Stake," *The Qualitative Report* 20, no. 2 (2015): 18-26, https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2015.2102.

Unemployment: has far reaching consequences on both the individual and the society. Individuals who are unemployed are often more susceptible to several challenges. It also impacts society and economy as whole. This section will explore what it means to be unemployed, types and the effects that unemployment has on an individual, society and economy.

Being without a job is indeed an enforced idleness of wage earners who are able and enthusiastic to work but cannot find jobs. In societies in which most people can earn a living only by working for others, being unable to find a job is a serious problem. Anachusi Chiamaka Perpetua notes, "Living without a source of income (i.e. a job) can be most distressing economic event in a person's life. Most people rely on their labor earnings to maintain their standard of living, and many people get from their job not only income but also a sense of personal accomplishment. A job loss means a lower living standard in the present, anxiety about the future and reduced self-esteem"[11] Unemployment results in deprivation and a feeling of rejection and personal failure. The extent of unemployment is widely used as a measure of workers welfare. The proportion of people unemployed manifests how a nation's human resources are used, and serves as an index of economic progress.

Even though, unemployment is one of the major macroeconomic and socio-economic problems of the world. It is a global challenge but worse in developing nations of the world like Nigeria, with its attendant social, economic, political, and psychological consequences. Unemployment has a very devastating, and agonizing impact in Nigeria and among Nigerians.

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[11] Anachusi Chiamaka Perpetua, "Causes of Unemployment in Nigeria: Research Project," Academia.edu, accessed February 11, 2024, 1-210, https://www.academia.edu/33213380/causes_of_Unemployment%20_in%20Nigeria.

Unemployment is a primary concern for the economy. It constitutes a series of serious developmental problems in the country.

> Dornbusch and Startz indicate, "Any country that is suffering from unemployment will experience two things which are: (i) lost production because people who don't work don't produce, and (ii) undesired effects on the distribution of income, based on the fact that only people that work can earn income and are as well richer than the unemployed. It will be very hard for a country that is suffering from unemployment to attain growth because it gives way to poverty and crimes and which can impede a country's development.[12]

This is a perfect reflection of what is happening in Nigeria. Unemployment has increased poverty exponentially, crime, violence, cultism, kidnapping, and moral laxity. It has adverse effect on health, security and political stability. It is a major reason why some Nigerians don't have purchasing power.

In order to establish clarity regarding the context under which unemployment is an indicator of poverty, it will be pertinent to comprehend this term. According to the World Bank, "Unemployment refers to the share of the labor force that is without work but available for and seeking employment."[13] In the same vein, Jhingan explains that unemployment is the "involuntary idleness of a person willing to work at a prevailing rate of pay but unable to find it. This implies that voluntarily unemployed people, who do not want to work and those who are not prepared to work at the prevailing wage rate are not regarded as unemployed."[14] These definitions suggest that for a person to be regarded as unemployed in the strict sense, such a person must be employable. Employable in the sense that the person is able and willing to be

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[12] Rudiger Dornbusch, Stanley Fischer, and Richard Startz, *Macroeconomics* (New York: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2011), 56.

[13] "Metadata Glossary," DataBank, World Bank, accessed February 11, 2024, https://databank.worldbank.org/metadataglossary/world-development-indicators/series/SL.UEM.TOTL.NE.ZS.

[14] M. L. Jhingan, *Advanced Economic Theory: Micro- and Macroeconomics*, 5th ed. (New Delhi: Vrinda Publications, 2001), 45.

employed in a sector, but due to unavailability of jobs the person has none. In Nigeria, many people are employable and are searching for jobs especially the youth but they cannot find any because of the unavailability of jobs.

The unavailability of jobs has motivated several researches on the types of unemployment in Nigeria and other developing countries. According to Anyanwu and Oaikhenan, unemployment is of different types and some of them are:

> (i) Deficient demand unemployment, which occurs when there is not enough aggregate demand to produce work for the whole labor force; (ii) Structural unemployment which normally occurs when the qualification and skills or any other relevant dimensions of the persons involved are not adequate for the available jobs; (iii) Frictional unemployment, which arises when there is continuous flow of people from one job to another (i.e. in and out of employment); and (iv) Cyclical unemployment, which is associated with trade cycle, especially during recession and depression that many employees usually lose their jobs. This means that it occurs when there is disequilibrium that leads to insufficient aggregate demand to purchase full employment in a country. (v) Residual unemployment, this type of joblessness is caused by old age, physical or mental disability, irresponsible attitude towards the job. (VI)Technological unemployment is caused by the constant technological changes that have increased mechanization of production. This results in less demand for man-power and displacement of human labor. (vii) Voluntary unemployment refers to the situation when the worker deliberately chooses not to work because of a low wage scale or not able to find out the suitable employment for him or her. In other words, the voluntary unemployment is when the person decides not to participate in the labor market, not because of the unavailability of jobs, but because of not finding the jobs of his/her choice or is not satisfied with the wage system.[15]

These types of unemployment are predominant in Nigeria, and pose a challenge to the nation and her economy. In addition to unemployment, Nigeria is also beleaguered by underemployment.

Underemployment is a situation whereby a person who has the required education, skills and experience does not work full time or takes a job that does not reflect their actual training and financial needs. Okun, describes underemployment as "a condition that exists when there

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[15] J. C. Anyanwu and H. E. Oaikhenan, *Modern Macroeconomics: Theory and Applications in Nigeria* (Onitsha, Nigeria: Joanee Educational Publishers, 1995), 65.

are people who are able to work, wishing to work, failed to obtain suitable employment but instead they are just employed to keep the body and soul together."[16] This means underemployment results when labor is not utilized for a maximum time or to full advantage. The result is that part-time workers will appreciate to work full time, and they will like their skills to be fully utilized. In the same vein, according to Mary Banke Iyabo Omoniyi, "The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines two major categories of underemployment. The first category involves those who are involuntarily working part-time for shorter than normal period per week and the second category involves the invisible underemployment which exists when a person's working time is not abnormally reduced but whose employment is inadequate."[17] In spite of the fact, that the descriptions of underemployment seems to vary both between and within academic disciplines, all seem to have certain elements in common, according to Philips, "underemployment is explained as an inferior lesser, or lower quality type of employment. In addition, underemployment is defined relative to the employment experiences of others with the same education or work history. In other cases, underemployment is defined relative to the person's own education and one's work history."[18] Having explained the concepts and types of unemployment, and underemployed, this research will subsequently evaluate the causes, and effects of unemployment.

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[16] Barbara S. Okun, "Distinguishing Stopping Behavior from Spacing Behavior with Indirect Methods," *Historical Methods: A Journal of Quantitative and Interdisciplinary History* 28, no. 2 (1995):85-96, https://doi.org/10.1080/01615440.1995.9956357.

[17] Mary Banke Iyabo Omoniyi, "Unemployment and Underemployment as Indices of Nigerian Youths' Mental Health and the Place of Agricultural Revolution as a Panacea: Implications for Counselling," *Journal of Education and Practice* 7, no. 10 (2016): 81.

[18] B. Philips, *The Economics of Poverty and Discrimination* (New York: Prentice Hall, 2002), 45.

Nigeria is a country blessed with a lot of resources, both natural and human. It is tormenting, that her resources are not put to efficient use. Nigeria has many of her citizens unemployed and underemployed. This implies that the rate of unemployment is really high. There are a number of factors responsible for the prevalence of unemployment in Nigeria, some of them are: lack of infrastructure, negligence of agriculture, corruption, lack of skills, poor standard of education, Tribalism, Nepotism, and economic recession.

Lack of infrastructure is one of causes of unemployment, and indicator of poverty in Nigeria provision of infrastructure minimizes poverty to a manageable level. Infrastructure industries and services are crucial for generating economic progress. Unfortunately, the contrary is the case in Nigeria. In most cities in Nigeria, infrastructural services are unavailable and, if available, they are under supplied and obsolete. Rufus Anthony and Bufumoh Pre-ebi note,

> Nigeria is the most populous black nation in Africa with huge mineral deposits and natural resources abound. But the unfortunate story is that, right from colonial days to the present the country is still battling on how these vast mineral and natural resources can be harnessed into real capital that will bring about sustainable development. Life in Nigeria is a mix of daunting challenges and boundless opportunities, yet with seeming boundless opportunities her citizens are still in poverty, unemployed, etc. with no hope and sign of improvement. Accordingly, Nigeria's infrastructure is in a deplorable state and the nations infrastructural needs are evident for all to see… the road transport is the most important element in the country's transportation sector carrying about 95% of all the nation's goods and passengers. But currently many of the roads are in disrepair because of poor maintenance and years of heavy traffic "[19]

Critically, infrastructural services are scarce in Nigeria. This has made life very unbearable and unendurable in Nigeria. Survival is totally a challenge and tussle. Lack of infrastructure have culminated in lower real incomes, malnutrition, poor health condition, high infant mortality and

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[19] Anthony and Pre-ebi, "Critical infrastructure Decay and Development Crisis in Nigeria" Global Journal of Human-Social Science, 17, no. 2 (2017): 59-64.

the general breakdown of the entire social institutions and infrastructure which exacerbates poverty. The infrastructural decay made it possible and easy for people to be without a means of livelihood. It also enhances diseases for some people. For instance, according to CGI Insights, "lack of access to clean, safe drinking water and adequate sanitation can lead to serious health problems," which then can lead to economic struggles.[20]

In addition, the irregular accessibility and availability of infrastructural services have made it hostile and in-conducive for some foreign investors that would have come to invest in Nigeria to change their direction to other countries with constant electricity, water supply, better airports, telecommunication services, operational post offices, and good roads in order to avoid operating at loss. This same problem has affected many local companies, and individuals who could not cope with bad roads and running generators all the time. This inimical environment forced them to fold up and throw their employees into the labor market. According to Nigerianscholars.com, "Lack of good roads, steady and sustainable power supply, etc. have made the country hostile to investors. The lack of infrastructure has led to the high cost of production. The absence of investors influences the number of available jobs negatively. The operating companies also use fewer people because of high cost of production."[21] This is the misery of Nigeria that after about sixty years plus of independence the country is still challenged by non-availability of essential infrastructure. The scarcity of these amenities is perennial and frustrates Nigerians, and given the resources the country has, Nigeria should have progressed and improved in all ramifications. Smart N. Uchegba and Obinna Ubani note that poor roads and a

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[20] CGI Insights, "Water Inequality: The Impact on Access to Clean Water and Sanitation," Gray Group International, February 12, 2024, https://www.graygroupintl.com/blog/water-inequality.

[21] "Causes of Unemployment in Nigeria," Nigerian Scholars, accessed February 11, 2024, https://nigerianscholars.com/tutorials/factors-of-production/causes-of-unemployment-in-nigeria/.

nonfunctional railway system "has reduced mobility and the movement of agricultural goods from one part to another. Thus the peasant farmers could not transport their produce with minimal cost. All these tend to perpetuate the poverty state of many Nigerians."[22] Likewise, "the epileptic power supply has put Nigeria's consumption rate below those of other countries, facilitating poverty."[23]

Added to the scarcity of infrastructure is the negligence of agriculture. Nigeria is endowed with lots of natural and human resources with large expanses of fertile land and yet the citizens live in abject poverty. Why the negligence of agriculture is a pointer to poverty in a country estimated to be the most populous country in Sub-Saharan Africa will be demonstrated. The negligence of the agricultural sector because of rural-urban migration of people especially the youths in search of white-collar jobs leads to a reduced employment rate in agriculture, which as well puts pressure on existing urban jobs. NaijaQuest.com states, "The average Nigerian has the 'white collar job' mentality. Many see agriculture as a 'dirty job' with little or no returns. Hence they abandon agriculture preferring to remain jobless."[24] Agriculture is a big boost to the economy, and employment but some Nigerians especially fresh graduates and job seekers detest the picture of working in a farm, rearing animals and growing crops. The consequence is abject poverty, hunger and debilitating health. Again, the challenge in Nigeria is that Nigerian farmers had been neglected for decades by the various governments adding that the farmers were poorly organized, a challenge that made them to lack the voice and power to push

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[22] Smart N. Uchegba and Obinna Ubani, "Urban Infrastructure and Poverty Reduction in Nigeria," ResearchGate, January 2009, 4, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/269702541_Urban_Infrastructure_and_Poverty_Reduction_in_Nigeria.

[23] Uchegba and Ubani, "Urban Infrastructure and Poverty Reduction," 4.

[24] "10 Major Causes of Unemployment in Nigeria and Solutions," Information, NaijaQuest, accessed February 11, 2024, https://naijaquest.com/causes-of-unemployment-in-nigeria-and-solutions/.

for farmer friendly policies. Politicians take farmers for granted. They reach out to them only during elections where they make promises to support farmers, but as soon as they get elected they set up offices in the cities and forget all about the farmers in the rural areas. Although Nigeria depends heavily on the oil industry for its budgetary revenue it is believed that if the agricultural sector is properly managed and enhanced, it would greatly increase the country's gross domestic product and even replace oil considering the vast area of land that is unused in Nigeria.

Another cause of unemployment is corruption which has been explained above. To say a little more about corruption is that those in government who are supposed to use public money for building more industries are busy embezzling the funds for their selfish use; the result is massive increase in unemployment rate. Nigerianfinder.com attests,

> The corruption in Nigeria makes government to spend less on the welfare of the citizens of the country. When corruption is taken as normal routine, functions which are to be performed by three or even four persons are taken up by only one person and that one person collects all the salaries meant for the three or four persons…in some government establishments where names of imaginary workers are added to pay-rolls and some few corrupt bosses collect such salaries at the end of the month without any work done. The result of all these immoral acts is increased unemployment for the masses.[25]

Apparently, the high level of embezzlement and fraud by the people in public office is part of the cause for the rising level of unemployment.

Essentially, unemployment is caused by lack of skills. This also have been noted above adding more to it, indicates that Some Nigerians especially the youth abhor and disparage acquisition of skills, thinking that the time spent on such is wasted, and opting for easy ways of

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[25] "Five Major Causes of Unemployment in Nigeria," Nigerian Finder, August 12, 2019, https://nigerianfinder.com/causes-of-unemployment-in-nigeria/#:~:text=5%20Major%20Causes%20of%20Unemployment%20in%20Nigeria%201,Other%20Natural%20Resources%20...%204%204.%20Corruption%20.

making money. With such mentality, some of these youth grow into adulthood without any skill to fall back on, thus becoming liability to themselves and others. Naijaquest.com comments, "Many graduates do not think it essential to empower themselves with skills that would further enhance their chances of getting job … the ones who eventually acquire such skills stand a higher chance of getting employed."[26] The indication is that it is hard to see any person who is full of skills suffering from unemployment. A skillful person can adjust to many situations and environments and at least feed himself or herself and his household appropriately. Unemployment is not only caused by corruption and lack of skills, poor quality of education is also a pertinent cause of unemployment.

Poor quality of education and bad educational planning; many graduates come out from the universities and colleges of education in Nigeria with little or nothing to contribute to the society. This is because, the educational system is faulty it does not prepare the graduates for self-employment. Very few graduates from the tertiary institutions secure employment. Few secure employment because there are not many facilities and few employment opportunities. Naijaquest.com adduces, "The standard of education is really low in Nigeria. Gone are the days where Nigerians graduates could effectively compete with their counterparts from other parts of the world. Every year half- baked graduates are released into the labor market. Due to the poor standard of education, many end up unemployed."[27] This manifests that some employers believe that Nigerian graduates are unemployable. This is as a result of the educational program which

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[26] "10 Major Causes of Unemployment," NaijaQuest.
[27] "10 Major Causes of Unemployment," NaijaQuest.

emphasizes theoretical knowledge more than practical use of knowledge. Employers of labor prefer people more with practical knowledge to those with theoretical knowledge.

Poor quality of education is one challenge in Nigeria, lack of education is another. In Nigeria, some people have no access to education. This is fundamentally caused by the government not providing enough educational infrastructures. Smart N. Uchegbu and Obinna Ubani note, "In relation to education infrastructure, the Federal Ministry of Education in Nigeria reports that out of 42.1 million Nigeria children eligible for primary education only 52.9% are in school. The balances of 47.1% are out of school. Similarly, out of 33.9 million eligible for secondary education, only 18.9% are in school, on account of poverty to foot the necessary bills."[28] The inability of the government to provide enough infrastructures for learning has resulted in some people to go through life without education. It has created a distressing and horrifying situation, where by some people study under the tree, sit on the bare floor, and use blocks as desks. NUT Secretary-General Mike Ene has said, "It is very pathetic that in the 21st century, our pupils are still studying under trees and dilapidated buildings, especially in Northern Nigeria. … The menace of banditry and Boko Haram in the North-East and North-West is being used by the state governments as excuses, which should not be."[29] This is disgusting and incredible. It is the case of insensitivity and government abdicating their responsibility. Essentially too, as some schools lack learning materials, so also do some lack qualified teachers because the government is not ready to fund education.

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[28] Uchegba and Ubani, "Urban Infrastructure and Poverty Reduction," 4.

[29] Mike Ene, quoted in Ayo Oyoze Baje, "Nigerian Children Learning Under Trees," *Punch*, November 26, 2019, https://punchng.com/nigerian-children-learning-under-trees/.

Added to the above factors as causes of unemployment is economic recession. Economic recession as a decline in economic activity and widespread drop in spending is a huge cause of unemployment. Unemployment in Nigeria has worsened by the recent decline in the country's economy. A lot of people have been laid off and new jobs are not created. Most companies continue to lay off employees because they cannot afford a lot of workers any more. Supporting this, Anachusi Chiamaka Perpetua affirms, "Continuous shortage in foreign earnings because of the dwindling oil price (which is the main source of Nigeria's economic revenue) and this has as well led to decline in government capital expenditure which would have been used to create jobs; and global economic downturn of activities as reflected in inflation, balance of payment deficits and debts burden etc."[30] Clearly, from the foregoing the unemployment situation in Nigeria is worsened by mass retrenchment in various sectors of the economy where companies have had downside or even shut down their companies due to cash squeeze. The causes of unemployment in Nigeria are considered because there are very essential to this research. The evaluation of the factors that cause unemployment will be followed by the negative effects of unemployment as intensifying poverty.

Unemployment is a real matter of concern to policy makers of both developing and developed countries as it can yield devastating effect on economic welfare, crime, the erosion of human capital, misery and social instability. Jonathan Ojarikre Oniore, Anthony Ojonugwa Bernard, and Emily Joshua Gyang add, "Long term unemployment always results in creating financial hardships, poverty, homelessness, crime, frustration and many other problems like breakdown and family tension, social isolation, loss of confidence and self-esteem. All these lead

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[30] Perpetua, "Causes of Unemployment in Nigeria," 1-210.

to the erosion of healthy society."[31] The effect of the above is that unemployment encourages significantly the depreciation of the Nigerian currency and decline in real wages. Low income in turn weakens the purchasing power of wage earners, which can also lead to unemployment for other workers, creating a cascading effect that ripples through the economy. This debars economic development.

Unemployment has social, political and economic consequences. The social impact of unemployment affect both the employed and the unemployed. Unemployment impacts the mental state of those who are still employed. They may become more concerned about losing their jobs or be hesitant to search for other employment because they have false belief they are lucky to be employed at all. They even feel guilty about having a job when their co-workers are out of work. Furthermore, unemployment has familial effects family members of an unemployed person are at risk because of financial hardship. According to Oniore, Bernard, and Gyang, social consequences are

> family tension and break down because of the inability of parents to meet the need of the family members, increased crime rate and criminal activities due to individual needs and family pressures, Boredom that could lead to negative thoughts, financial hardship as an unemployed person, has the possibility of committing suicide, erosion of esteem, alienation from the society and social functions, health problems associated with stigma.[32]

The social impacts of unemployment are multifarious. It may lead to homelessness, family pressure, and estrangement. It motivates crime such as theft, high jacking and burglary. The greater concern is health challenge. The country's public health system is failing the people and

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[31] Jonathan Ojarikre Oniore, Anthony Ojonugwa Bernard, and Emily Joshua Gyang, "Macroeconomic Determinants of Unemployment in Nigeria," *International Journal of Economics, Commerce and Management* 3, no. 10 (October 2015): 215-227.

[32] Oniore, Bernard, and Gyang, "Macroeconomic Determinants of Unemployment," 215-227.

is struggling to deal with the very high disease burden. Since unemployed people do not have the capacity or choice to use health facilities, they often do not get proper or sustained treatment.

Political consequence of unemployment is painful. It gives room to thuggery, destruction, loss of life and indifference to political activities. Large numbers of people out of work can lead to social unrest and revolution. Oniore, Bernard, and Gyang note that the political effect of unemployment encourages

> loss of confidence in the political process, political apathy, ignite revolution, breeds political thugs that could disrupt a political process, creates room for the political class to manipulate the political process as well. Economic consequences are: increased incidences of poverty, reduction in National output of goods and services, increased rural-urban migration, high debt rate, waste of resources, and promotion of unrest.[33]

The outcome of unemployment is not encouraging. It stimulates protest, and civil unrest. Its impact on poverty is of great concern, likewise that of education. It stimulates low education at both basic and high level. The fact that poor people are unable to attain the best available education and skills at the top educational institutions has a long term implications in that it deprives them of employment opportunities. The situation is not irredeemable, if employment opportunities are available, industries established and investors have friendly environment unemployment will be reduced.

In addition to political, economic, and social consequences, the aftermath of unemployment on the youth is the worst. It fundamentally challenges and threatens developing countries especially Nigeria. The Youth think they are marginalized, segregated, alienated and because of that have apathy for the society. Ngozi Nwogwugwu and Godwin Ndubuisi Irechukwu declare,

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[33] Oniore, Bernard, and Gyang, "Macroeconomic Determinants of Unemployment," 215-227.

> Youth unemployment may be regarded as one of the major problems confronting the Nigerian state today, unemployed youths feel alienated from the society and have a total distrust for the political system. As a result of this condition, some youths engage in various nefarious activities that frustrate economic development of the state … unemployment in Nigeria is partly responsible for the rising incidence of poverty, disruption of oil production through pipeline vandalization, emergency of deadly groups like Boko Haram, Niger Delta armed groups, armed robbers, kidnappers, etc.[34]

The disreputable activities of the youth in Nigeria hinder economic development, and cause more harm to the society. The youth destroy public and private properties. This deepens economic hardship, reduces the standard of living, minimizes life expectancy and does not encourage social interaction. The impact of unemployment has given credence to youth restiveness, aggressiveness and sadness. Unemployment has led some Nigerian youth to crime as a way to vent frustration and anger. Many unemployed individuals feel they have been dealt a raw deal in life and may lash out at society by engaging in criminal activities. The lack of fulfilment among the youth should be given serious attention.

The negative impact of unemployment is obvious and clear. It is depressing, frustrating, stressful, and despairing to be without a meaningful job. It causes, housing stress, physical and mental health challenges. Unemployment induces malnutrition, high mortality rate and destitution. Moreover, it is a source of anxiety, and affects the disposable income of families, erodes purchasing power, diminishes employee morale, and reduces an economy's output. Supporting this, Cosmas Anayochukwu Nwankwo and Adaobi Patrictia Ifejiofor articulate,

> In a country like Nigeria, … very often families depend on their son or daughter graduating from school or college to take up employment in order to support the entire family, when that does not happen, the financial woes are unimaginably sorrowful. It is

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[34] Ngozi Nwogwugwu and Godwin Ndubuisi Irechukwu, "Socio-Political Implications of Youth Unemployment in Nigeria's Economic Development," *Journal of Economics and Finance* 6, no. 4 (2015): 27-34.

> equally easy to visualize that lack of steady income could apart from the above ills also lead to inadequate nutrition and adversely affect health … of the family.[35]

When a person is unemployed, he or she has no money, the person spends less, and may accrue more debt, the person needs become a herculean task, and a struggle. This section has established the consequences of unemployment especially on the youth. It manifested that the aftermath are many, but not insurmountable. It emboldens the government to open up avenues of employment, encourage both local and foreign investors. Improve infrastructure and entrepreneurship. Revamp other sectors of the economy like agriculture, and grant soft loan to fresh graduates to enable them be engaged meaningfully.

Another factor that indicates poverty is poor remuneration. This section will explore the conceptual meaning of remuneration and how it emboldens poverty. Poor remuneration has been the problem of public organization in developing countries Nigeria inclusive. In Nigeria, public and private workers groan and suffer as a result of poor remuneration. As it is known, workers receive salary because of their labor that is why, according to Ifeanyichukwu Michael Abada, Nneka Ifeoma Okafor, and Paul Hezekiah Omeh,

> labor has remained the vital machine upon which other factors of productions have relied. It is being paid wages and salaries as part of the compensation for its contributions to the growth and development of the organization … labor has ensured the day to day execution of decisions and policies of the state. Worrisome is the fact that despite the tremendous roles played out by the nation's workforce, its wages had been compromised and always been a subject of debate by levels of governments involved.[36]

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[35] Cosmas Anayochukwu Nwankwo and Adaobi Patrictia Ifejiofor, "Impact of Unemployment on Nigerian Economic Development: A Study of Selected Local Government Area in Anambra State, Nigeria," *European Journal of Business and Management* 6, no. 35 (2014): 103-111.

[36] Michael Ifeanyichukwu Abada, Nneka Ifeoma Okafor, and Paul Hezekiah Omeh, "Nigerian Morbid Federalism and Demand for Political Restructuring," *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations* 14, no. 1 (January–March 2020): 13-21.

When workers are given compensation commensurate to their labor they produce more. This indicates that remuneration gives workers incentive and motivation to work. It is also natural that people at any level or stage of production work with the strong objective of receiving payment for the services they rendered at the period, usually clearly stated in the contract of employment jointly agreed by the two parties.

According to Investopedia, remuneration is "the total compensation received by an employee including base salary, bonuses, commission payments, overtime pay, and any other monetary benefits that the employee receives."[37] Given this reality, a company's contribution to a retirement plan is referred as compensation, and as such is a component of remuneration. Even providing housing for workers by the employer is also part of remuneration. On its own, CFI describes remuneration as

> Any type of compensation or payment that an individual or employee receives as payment for their services or the work that they do for an organization or company. It includes whatever base salary an employee receives, along with other forms of payment that accrue during the course of their work, which includes expense account funds, bonuses, and stock options."[38]

This description implies that compensation to a worker includes more than basic salary. It comprises several potentially benefits like using the company's car, and health insurance. It is compensation or payment received for services or work rendered.

Having described what wage is, it is essential to establish how the wage Nigerian workers receive is an indicator of poverty. There is no second guessing that the remuneration the Nigerian workers receive is meagre. It is inadequate when compared to the standard of living and

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[37] Investopedia Team, "Remuneration: Defining Employee Compensation," Investopedia, updated February 10, 2024, https://www.investopedia.com/terms/r/remuneration.asp.

[38] CFI Team, "Remuneration," CFI, accessed February 14, 2024, https://corporatefinanceinstitute.com/resources/career/remuneration/.

market forces in the country. Even when compared to their counterparts elsewhere. According to Abada, Okafor, and Omeh,

> In his maiden address [for] International Workers' Day 2017, the president [of the] Trade Union Congress (TUC), Bobboi Bala Kaigama, reiterated the poor living conditions of Nigerian workers by saying that high inflationary rate has adverse effects on the agreed minimum wage of eighteen thousand naira (N18,000). It is significant to recall that, in 2017, the labor submitted a proposal of fifty-six thousand naira and ninety thousand naira (N90,000) to the federal government as new minimum wages, describing the eighteen thousand naira as poor and cannot take a worker from his place of pay point to the gate. According to Alade Lawal, the secretary-general of Association of Senior Civil Servants of Nigeria (ASCSN), he berated the federal and states government over their neglect on payments of the agreed national minimum wage.[39]

The poor remuneration of workers in Nigeria is a threat to their economic power. It is a hazard because they are unable to procure what is necessary for the various purposes of life, and the chief of all is self-preservation. It is hard for them to take care of their families, send children to school, provide decent health care, and save for the future. If one cannot provide for the present, having any substantial resources for the future is a mirage. As living wage is meant to improve the standard of living of workers, it becomes apparent that what Nigeria workers receive as remuneration is insufficient. Apparently, with their wages Nigerian workers are unable leave the poverty line, and have financial security. Al Jazeera reports,

> Forty percent of people in Nigeria live in poverty, figures published by the statistics office on Monday showed, highlighting the low levels of wealth in a country that has Africa's biggest economy.
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> The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), in a report about poverty and inequality from September 2018 to October 2019, said 40 percent of people in the continent's most

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[39] Ifeanyichukwu Michael Abada, Nneka Ifeoma Okafor, and Paul Hezekiah Omeh, "New National Minimum Wage and States' Viability in Nigeria's Fragile Economy," *International Journal of Advanced Research in Social Sciences, Environmental Studies & Technology* 4, no. 2 (October 2019): 21, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338526581_New_National_Minimum_Wage_and_States'_Viability_in_Nigeria's_Fragile_Economy.

> populous country lived below its poverty line of 137,430 naira ($381.75) a year. It said that represents 82.9 million people.[40]

Even though wages have been very poor in Nigeria, the government has involved itself in reforming the civil service to reflect the prevailing state of the nation's economy. These were as a result of continuous agitation and cries of workers. For the fact that labor remains the vital machine and essential tool for production and development of the society, it needs to be motivated and this could be accomplished through periodic review of the wages of workers and policy of wage. To alleviate poverty, the remuneration of workers has to meet the economic standard of living in the country.

Migration is one of the indicators and pointers of poverty. Nigerians move from Nigeria to other regions. The focus of this subheading will be what is migration, why Nigerians and other African people move and the possible consequences. Colonization brought significant changes in Africa as a whole and Nigeria in particular. The advancement in technology, incorporation of African societies into new global economy brought about by the dispersion of capital investments, improved communication and transportation, cultural and human capital transformations and the growth in the literate population systems. This post -colonial inclusion of Africa into the global systems of economic and social production created new opportunities for Nigerians and other Africans at the local and international levels. Apparently, with the above factors, Nigerians unlike before were able to migrate with ease to other countries especially in the 21st century. John A. Arthur, Joseph Takougang, and Thomas Owusu observe,

> The first decade of the 21st century continues to witness the massive migration of Africans from the continent. Spurred by negative economic, political and social factors

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[40] Forty Percent of Nigerians Live Below the Poverty Line: Report," Economy | Poverty and Development, Al Jazeera, May 4, 2020, https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2020/5/4/forty-percent-of-nigerians-live-below-the-poverty-line-report.

> that have plagued the continent since independence, in conjunction with the global economy and technological revolution of the last two decades or so, these African migrants are seeking refuge in the new global village.[41]

The fact is that migration has taken Africans, and indeed Nigerians to various parts of the continent. Nigerian immigrants include both male and female, and they travel mostly to places where they are welcomed, with less racial prejudice, and where the country's immigration policy is most favorable. Clearly, Nigerian and other Africans immigrants have the same objective. Arthur, Takongong, and Owusu comment,

> Regardless of their sex, country and region of origin, or their educational status, these diaspora Africans are all united by their common African origin and the quest to seek a better life for themselves and their families in the diaspora and for those still at home. The search for global economic and cultural opportunities is the primary motivation behind the migration of Africans.[42]

Migration by Africans, especially Nigerians to other continents, knows no gender, academic barrier or qualification is not factored in, even age is not considered. It is for Nigerians who are able to, who have what it takes, and for those who are admitted and welcomed in the particular country. Again, Nigerians migrate for various reasons ranging from employment opportunities, educational purposes and escape violent conflict. A clear meaning of the concept migration will be beneficial for it will help to ascertain why people seek to migrate to other places.

According to Bernard V. Brady migrants are "people who move, either voluntary or involuntary, from one region to another. An immigrant moves from his or her original country to another country with the intent to settle there."[43] The US immigration glossary explains that

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[41] Istvan Tarrosy, review of Africans in the Global Migration:Searching for the Promise Land, edited by John A. Arthur, Joseph Takougang, and Thomas Owusu, Journalof Third World Studies 31, no 1.(January 2014): 251, https://www. researchgate.net/publication/264532753 Review Africans in the Global Migration Searching for the promised Land edited by John A. Arthur, Joseph Takougang, and Thomas Owusu Lexington Books, 2012.

[42] Arthur, Takougang, and Owusu, Searching for the Promised Land, 1-2.

[43] Bernard V. Brady, *Essential Catholic Social Thought* (New York: Orbis Books, 2008), 207.

immigration is "the act of leaving one's countries and moving to another country of which they are not natives, nor citizens, to settle or reside there, especially as permanent residents or naturalized citizens, or take up employment as a migrant worker or temporarily as a foreign worker."[44] The implication is that the movement could be temporarily or permanently, and people also move for a variety of reasons both local and internationally. *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* defines *migration* as the act of moving "from one country, place, or locality to another."[45] Africans in general and Nigerians in particular started to migrate to other countries right from time. They migrated for political, economic and social reasons. According to Arthur, Takongang and Owusu,

> Africans started looking beyond the continent for the fulfillment of unmet needs at home. The postcolonial period and the penetration of capitalist investments, coupled with the improvements in human capital resources created aspirations whose fulfillment could not be had in Africa. Political and economic morass stymied the robustness of the postcolonial economic ascension of the newly independent nations.[46]

In effect, migration happens because people want to improve themselves, academically, and economically. This means people migrate where they have access to good education, have sense accomplishment, be more productive, reduce poverty and develop skills. Political instability, inter- tribal violence, religious wars, asylum and refugees are other reasons while Nigeria migrate.

Historically, the first group of Africans, and more so, Nigerians who came to North America were those supported by their various home lands to come and acquired higher and more education as to assist at home after their studies. Arthur, Joseph, and Owusu articulate,

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[44] "Immigration Definition," U.S. Immigration Glossary, accessed February 14, 2024, https://www.usimmigration.org/glossary/immigration.

[45] *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. (2008), s.v. "migrate."

[46] John A. Arthur, Joseph Takougang, and Thomas Owusu, "Searching for Promised Lands: 12.

> The first period consisted of Africans who were sponsored by their respective home governments to travel to the United States to pursue advanced degrees in the arts and sciences. This period started in the mid-to-late 1950s lasting until about the 1970s. During the two decades, thousands of Africans got the opportunity to travel to the United States and Canada. The postcolonial governments recognized the imperative of well-educated cadres of civil servants and skilled workers to work in both the public and private sectors following the end of colonization and the ascension of African political leaders to power.[47]

This is essential because as most African countries were gaining independence, there was a need of educated, skilled and qualified personnel to take over from the colonizers. To accomplish this some people were selected and sponsored to go and acquire advanced degrees outside of Africa. The people sent and supported, carried on nation building and administration of the civil society when they came back.

On the same token, some others immigrate to other countries because of political instability. The military meddling with politics became rampant and caused coup and counter coups in some African countries like Nigeria. The lives of many were in danger, and they left the country for safety and protection, Arthur, Takongang and Owusu, elucidate,

> The second period of Africans to emigrate started leaving after the mid -1970s as country after country in the region were roiled in political and economic conflicts. In some of the countries (particularly Nigeria), incessant coup d'etats marked the ascendancy of military in African political culture. Constitutional governance structures and civil order deteriorated as democratic institutions were replaced with military regimes.[48]

The disorder and conflict in Nigeria because of military takeover of power became prevalent that some people were hunted for being courageous, speaking out, and being the voice of the voiceless. Their audacity was misconstrued as causing instability and mayhem in Nigeria. Vividly, in a bid to escape the wrath of the military they fled the country.

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[47] Arthur, Takougang, and Owusu, "Searching for Promised Lands," 1-2.
[48] Arthur, Takougang, and Owusu, "Searching for Promised Lands," 1-2.

Tribal struggle like political instability is another reason why some people migrate. Tribal war is very common in Nigeria and other parts of Africa. As indicated before now, tribal and ethnic conflicts have caused a lot of people to be displaced. When people are displaced, their properties are looted, and they become homeless. Not able to withstand homelessness they start to plan to move to other countries. Arthur, Takongang and Owusu comment,

> The fragile coexistence of tribal, ethnic, and clan groups fractured resulting in civil wars and conflicts which led to the internal displacement of millions of Africans in their own countries. Some had to flee to less troubled spots to seek haven from the violence. The conflicts stymied the economic progress that several of the countries were making immediately following the end of foreign domination. More significantly, the civil conflicts made it difficult to incorporate diverse tribal and ethnic groups into nation-states.[49]

Tribal conflict hinders economic, social and political progress. People are killed, maimed and displaced. Women are raped and humiliated. It causes some people to be orphans, fatherless, motherless or childless. Economic activity ceases, and that escalates hunger, and inflation. Both government and individual Properties, infrastructures, houses, farms are looted, destroyed and burnt. Clearly, tribal hostility increases homelessness, and health hazards. Imperatively, schools, hospitals are closed, and portable water becomes a challenge. The aftermath of tribal hostility motivates some people to migrate to more peaceful and stable areas, where conflicts are minimal and people go about their day to day activities without the fear of threats and intimidations.

Even though, people migrate because of tribal antagonism, economic crunch is one of the reasons why Africans, and truly Nigerians migrate to other countries. In African, unemployment and underemployment are very common. The skilled and unskilled, educated and uneducated

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[49] Arthur, Takougang, and Owusu, "Searching for Promised Lands," 1-2.

roam the streets searching for jobs, and therefore unable to meet their financial problems. Arthur, Takongang, and Owusu express,

> unmet economic and social needs created despair among Africans. Most started looking to the West or travel to other African countries…Migration is seen as a response to and a strategy for confronting the poverty, deprivation and the general lack of economic and cultural opportunities. The outcome often associated with international migration is that it offers the possibilities to send money home to assist extended family members in meeting barest economic needs.[50]

People involved in this type of migration are mostly graduates from secondary and tertiary educational institutes who have been facing chronic unemployment. Not minding the consequences of this kind of migration like brain drainage, and labor shortage in certain areas these graduates perceive it differently. They see it as a means to facilitate their incorporation into a changing global economy where both skilled and unskilled have a chance to be employed and survive.

By all accounts, some people migrate as refugees or asylum seekers. According to the United Nations' convention relating to the status of Refugees, refugee is,

> a person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence…is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.[51]

An asylum seeker is "a person who asks to be recognized as a refugee by the government of the country he or she wants to enter"[52] Many people migrate because they are targets of the ruling party and their lives are endangered. Because, they are outstanding in condemning the ills of the

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[50] Arthur, Takougang, and Owusu, "Searching for Promised Lands," 1-2.
[51] Brady, *Essential Catholic Social Thought*, 207.
[52] Brady, *Essential Catholic Social Thought*, 207.

society they are doomed to die. This agonizing situation will inspire them to escape and flee from their countries or where they are living. The irony is that if they stay back in their country of origin they will be killed, their houses burnt and properties looted without investigating those who are responsible for such infamous action.

Having stated the root causes and underlining factors of migration as poverty, political instability, injustice, religious and ethnic conflicts, it will be plausible, for countries to address these problems so that migrants can remain in their homeland and support their families. Supporting, Bernard V. Brady reiterates, "All persons have the right to find in their own countries the economic, political, and social opportunities to live in dignity and achieve a full life through the use of their God-given gifts. In this context, work that provides a just, living wage is a basic human need."[53] When people are able to have the basic necessities of life in their countries, for instance employment, security, food, shelter and improved infrastructure to migrate to other places will be for vacation, not to stay and search for greener pastures. Some migrants are not comfortable leaving their families, friends, usual environment and culture. The economic reasons that are pointers to poverty, and possible things that may be done for the country to advance economically have been noted. The next section will study the societal indicators of poverty.

4.5.2 Societal Indicators

As the economic factors that are indicators of poverty are essential to this study so also are the societal Indicators. That is why the emphasis of this section will be the societal pointers

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[53] Brady, *Essential Catholic Social Thought*, 208.

of poverty. The societal factors of poverty are those reasons that are endemic in society that do not allow the citizens to easily improvement their quality of life. Among such societal indicators are; moral decadence, incessant crime, Thuggery and Violence, Kidnapping, Prejudice and Nepotism, Human trafficking and Ritual Practices.

Moral decadence: Moral decadence is disturbing as it is rampant in Nigeria today. It is discussed almost everywhere in the country. It dominates our intellectual conversation, discussed in every home, and is creating waves daily in the media. It started in a low key manner, but currently it has snowballed into a proportion that is worrisome and irritating. Francis Odewoye asserts, "The problem of moral decadence … which initially was gradual in bites has now, attained the level that can best be described as the incurable cancer disease, the tentacles of which have spread into nooks and crannies of the country."[54] The magnitude of this problem is bewailing and is a nightmare to all well-meaning Nigerians. Moral decadence, manifests itself in various forms like; crime, thuggery and violence, kidnapping, human trafficking, ritual practices, drug abuse, indecent dressing. It is because of this that this research will investigate critically what is moral decadence, causes, implications, and possible solutions.

According to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, decadence is "behaviour, attitudes, etc. that show a fall in standards, especially moral ones, and an interest in pleasure and fun rather than more serious things."[55] For Francis Odewoye, this means "moral decadence is a situation whereby someone passes from a state of goodness to a lower state by losing qualities

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[54] Francis Sunday Odewoye, "Moral Decadence among Youth: Causes and Solutions," HubPages, August 19, 2017, https://discover.hubpages.com/literature/PROBLEM-OF-MORAL-DECADENCE-AMONG-THE-YOUTHS.

[55] *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, s.v. "decadence," https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/decadence?q=decadence.

which are considered normal, ethical and desirable."[56] This implies that moral decadence is falling or descending from higher standard to a lower standard. It is indeed a gross decline, and reduction in moral values of the society. It is going contrary to natural law and order, not being faithful to ethical norms and ethos of the society. It is indeed going against the code of conduct of the society. Because moral decadence is a superfluous behavior against the norms of the society, it will be plausible to investigate some of its causes in Nigeria. Many views are abound as to the causes of moral decadence in Nigeria, among them are; Government take - over of schools, lack of effective moral instruction, non-chalant attitude of parents, arrogance of the youth, vision less leaders, and proliferation of churches and consequences of our past (civil war 1967-1970).

Government takeover of schools is one of the causes of moral decadence in Nigeria. Before the Nigeria civil war (1967-1970) most schools in Nigeria were managed by church personnel. They taught good moral principles, good behavior and discipline in the students. They made sure that respect and faithfulness was implemented. But after the civil war, government took over the management of schools and the effect is moral decadence as is seen currently. Francis Odewoye alludes,

> At the end of the civil war, people were back to their trade, and government took over schools the situation changed drastically. Students had turned brutes, disrespectful, incorrigible, and disobedient. Anarchy began to reign. The take-over of schools by the government suited the various teachers who were ready to sacrifice their teaching profession for private business. School then started to decay for want of care.[57]

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[56] Odewoye, "Moral Decadence among Youth."
[57] Odewoye, "Moral Decadence among Youth."

The government take-over of schools was a misadventure. It ushered in rot in the primary and secondary school system. It created lack of qualitative education, eroded the value of hard work, introduced indiscipline and examination malpractices. Odewoye notes, "However, the civil war and the government take -over of schools are the major factors that paved way for moral degeneration in our society. The war rendered so many people homeless and poor. Lots and lots of undreamed ideas became realistic as only the fittest can survive."[58] The government take -over schools, led to deplorable state of public schools in terms of decayed infrastructure and sloppy administration. It further caused low standard of education, the inability of the government to fund education, and lack of commitment by the teachers are responsible for production of half-baked graduates from our educational system. Because some graduates are unsound educationally, they are unemployable because they lack the technical and practical knowledge necessary for employment. With unemployment, poverty and hunger set in.

The collapse of the educational system is manifested in the lack of effective moral instruction which is another factor for moral decadence. Before the takeover of schools by the government moral instruction was taught in schools, likewise civics, patriotism and value of discipline. With the take- over of schools such disciplines were neglected and stopped. The negative impact currently is what is wrong with the society. Odewoye argues,

> One other problem, I observe and believe, that contributed negatively and worsened the situation, and which is what I want all reasonable persons to note, is the missing linking between religion and modern education. I mean liberal and moderate religions. We must abhor any form of fanaticism and extremism in world religions. Religious and effective moral instructions were thrown to the wind. I wonder which society would progress without a sound moral foundation.[59]

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[58] Odewoye, "Moral Decadence among Youth"
[59] Odewoye, "Moral Decadence among Youth."

Lack of moral instruction in school has a very outrageous effect especially among the youth. It makes them vulnerable and susceptible to crime, kidnapping and other violent crimes. The nonexistence of moral instruction, has eroded the moral foundation, and debased the society of its ethical values. Some people because of the absence moral instruction have deviated, and behave abnormally from the norms of the society given room to extreme poverty.

Government take-over of schools and lack of effective moral instruction are not the only reasons for moral decadence, the care-free attitude of parents is another cause. Some parents have abdicated their responsibility towards the moral upbringing of their children. Parents talk about good old days when children were brought up with sound moral and ethical sanctity. Why is that parents who were privileged to have received quality moral education in the past, lack the ability to inculcate such education in their children. Odewoye confirms,

> It is an irony! The truth is that parents have abdicated their primary responsibility of building up their homes and families in pursuit of wealth, riches, material things, career, pleasure and fun. And have developed all manner of excuses to justify their negligence of their noble duty… to the detriment of the children who are now growing into monsters and deviant social misfit. What an awful experience![60]

It is pathetic that parents can no longer discipline their children. The effect is abject decadence, indiscipline and absolute state of nadir. Moral decadence puts the society at a great risk of disorder, and chaos. The consequence of the vacuum created by parents in abandoning their obligation towards their children is indolence, restiveness and care free attitude of the children which adversely impacts the society. Evidently, indolence as noted above instigates poverty, and impacts adversely on the individual and society. It also leads to lack of energy, enthusiasm, opportunities, and hopelessness which is not economically beneficial to the society. For the

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[60] Odewoye, "Moral Decadence among Youth."

book of Proverbs states, "How long will you slumber, O sluggard? When will you rise from sleep? A little slumber, A little folding of the hands to sleep –so shall your poverty come on you like a prowler, and your need like an armed man" (Proverbs 6: 9-11).

Another core factor that contributes to moral decadence is the bad example of our leaders this has negative impression on the society. The inordinate example of those in office in Nigeria does not in any way help matters. Their extravagant, frivolous and spurious lifestyles have corrupted the whole society. Odewoye recounts, "Our society is so infested with corruption virus to the extent that 16 year-old boy knows how to dupe innocent … people on the internet and make thousands of dollars. The mature 'toddler' buys expensive cars and lives like a don."[61] It is disheartening the level moral decadence has taken the nation. Moral decadence in the form of corruption, especially leadership corruption hinders the economic progress of the nation. R. I. Akindele, B. O. Oginni, and S. A. Agada remark,

> Corruption heralded the erosion of role based behavior and has weakens social cooperation thereby locking the society in a kind of gigantic prisoner's dilemma. The behavior of leaders is crucial and sometimes determines the implementation of strategies adopted for national development. The national problems being experienced in the overall development of the country these days are attributed by majority to poor leadership simply because the leaders are rooted and headed in corruption.[62]

Because of corruption people lack confidence and trust to invest. Corruption has gravely lowered the establishment of businesses. This has ushered in unemployment, hunger, destitution, and crime.

Crime is one of the most devastating effects of moral decadence. A perusal through news media, magazines and news from Broadcasting corporations as well as the discussions among the

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[61] Odewoye, "Moral Decadence among Youth."

[62] R. I. Akindele, B. O. Oginni, and S. A. Agada, "National Development and Political Corruption in Nigeria: Leadership at Crossroad," *European Journal of Business and Management* 5, no. 9: (2013): 170-179.

general public clearly indicate that modern Nigeria has armed robbery problem. It is by no means alluding to any claim that armed robbery is the only social malaise threatening modern Nigeria. It manifests that armed robbery to many citizens in the country is, a most daily occurrence and feared crime, and constitutes a terrible threat and challenge to modern Nigeria society. Armed robbery has caused a lot of menace in the country, because of it many people have health challenges, maimed, killed, and lose valuables. It has rendered some people fatherless, motherless, orphans, childless, and poor. Smart Egwu Otu indicates, "Armed robbery remains one of the most singular leading causes of fear–day and night among many contemporary Nigerians. It pervades all corners of the country. It holes people in their rooms, scared travellers, brings poverty to the people, deprives people of their loved ones."[63] Because of armed robbery households are at alert, and individuals, neighborhoods and communities kept awake all nights. High fences, protection bars, and hard wooden and iron doors in both residences and commercial buildings have become the rule than the exception.

Armed robbery is a prevailing social phenomenon that negatively affects the lives and social functioning of a significant number of people in contemporary Nigerian society. According to Okolo, armed robbery is "stealing during which force and violence or the threat of violence are employed."[64] Armed robbery is as old as mankind itself, and it characterizes all known societies both developed and developing societies. However, variations exist not only from society to society but also from time to time, as well as from strict enforcement to none. Following, Otu notes "It is unlawful possession of lethal weapons by a person or group of

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[63] Smart Egwu Otu, "Armed Robbery and Armed Robbers in Contemporary Nigeria: The Social Learning and Model Visited," *International Journal of Criminology and Sociological Theory* 3, no. 2 (2010): 438-456.

[64] G. U. Okolo, *Social Work: An Introductory Analysis* (Calabar, Nigeria: University of Calabar Press, 2002), 55.

persons with the intent to or actual dispossess of a person or group of persons of his/her or their valuable (s) against the person (s) will, either with force or the threat of it."[65] The definitions allude to the fact that armed robbery points to abuse, violation of fundamental human rights and marginalization. It is associated with insecurity of lives and properties, loss of human resources, reduction of the level development, unemployment, poverty, permanent disability on the victims and wastage of state resources on security agents.

Evidently, when a person's property is taken by force, and without the person's consent, poverty may engulf the person especially if the property is not recovered. Poverty also may submerge the people whose human rights have been violated by armed robbers because the activities of armed robbers in Nigeria are increasing at an alarming rate. Both the rich and the poor are always in perpetual state of fear because nobody knows where and when they will strike. Armed robbery occurrence is increasing daily in Nigeria more than other crimes. It takes place both in public and private places. Neubeck states,

> There is a larger increase in the incidence of robbery than for any other index offense. Robbery took place on the average on once every seventy-five seconds. Half the robberies known to the police are committed on the street, the remainder occurred within households and business establishments. Victims are unlikely to know the law violators and it is relatively easy to get away with the crime.[66]

This entails that armed robbery in contemporary Nigeria happens in various places and takes various forms. It can be by waylaying victims on the highways and on transit points, storming residences, commercial buildings, public and private establishments and even religious places. It may also be by maneuvering aimed at outsmarting victims tactically; and attacking

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[65] Otu, "Armed Robbery and Armed Robbers," 438-456.
[66] Kenneth J. Neubeck, *Social Problems: A Critical Approach* (Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman, 1979), 53.

banks. It looks somewhat unique in nature and outlook. Obviously, armed robbery involves monetarily lost, materials, and above all human resources arising from it are better imagined than revealed. The heartbreaking effects of armed robbery will manifest how armed robbery contributes to poverty in Nigeria.

Armed robbery as an antisocial behavior as noted above, takes various kinds, form or shape, no matter the nature it takes it leaves negative effects on the people and society. It is one single crime that changes the life pattern of a family or individual. One of the overwhelming effects of armed robbery in Nigeria is insecurity of lives and properties. In various robbery incidences, innocent citizens are killed, maimed to suffer while one's livelong savings and sweat are lost within a twinkle of an eye. Yecho sorrowfully expresses, "A successful robbery entails the direct loss of property on an individual. Such property is transferred from rightful owner to another person. Most violent crime also leads to the loss of productivity through the incapacity of the victims. Most of the victims of violent crimes are incapacitated, thereby denying the society of their contribution to the output of the nation."[67] When somebody's loses his property and have no other means of livelihood the effect is indescribable and intractable poverty. This is more if the person has nothing else to live on. It may lead to the children to withdraw from school because the parents or guardians may not be able to pay the tuition. It can also expose the family to health hazard, and untimely death.

Furthermore, the killing and shooting of young people by armed robbers depletes the working population, and this leads to loss of human resources. The resources that would have

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[67] J. I. Yecho, "Violent Crime Wave in Contemporary Nigeria: The Case of Benue State," *Benue Journal of Sociology* 3, no. 1 (2010): 22, quoted in Noah Lumun Abanyam, David Bauchi, and Daniel Orngu Tormusa, "The Effects of Armed Robbery in Nigeria," *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science* 11, no. 3 (May–June 2013): 58.

been used for economic development of the country, is rather used to care for the victims of robbery attack. Noah Lumun Abanyam, David Bauchi, and Daniel Orngu Tormusa assert, "Many resources are channeled to physical and psychological treatment of victims of armed robbery. The resources that would have been used to stimulate the growth of other sectors of economy are also invested in security to enable the security agents curtail the activities of robbers."[68] When the little resource available in the country is used to care for the victims of armed robbery or to beef up security, other areas are neglected. The inattention motivates poverty and hunger. In addition, it creates an awful situation where people live in constant fear, and emotional trauma. Young people are wasted and injured and that hinders the progress of the country. The fear of armed robbers and insecurity impede foreign and local investors from committing their resources, and the situation motivates people not having work to do.

One of the worst effects of armed robbery is unemployment. As armed robbers rob and destroy industries and other government establishments the aftermath is retrenchment of workers because of the inability to pay workers salary. Worst is that robbers may kill the bread winner of the family by that very act the family will be subjected to poverty. Again, armed robbery reduces social interaction among people. Yecho declares,

> There is also the social cost dimension. People no longer go out at specific periods to interact and carry out social activities/functions. Everybody becomes suspicious of one another. In a society where everyone is suspicious of each other, where movement is restricted for fear of criminal victimization, there can be no meaningful development and progress. Finally, there is also a physical cost dimension to incidences of violent crimes. Robbery and kidnap could result to death or permanent disability of the victim.[69]

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[68] Abanyam, Bauchi, and Tormusa, "The Effects of Armed Robbery in Nigeria," 58.

[69] Yecho, "Violent Crime Wave in Contemporary Nigeria," 23, quoted in Abanyam, Bauchi, and Tormusa, "The Effects of Armed Robbery in Nigeria," 58.

Armed robbery is a serious threat to the economic progress of the country. It is expedient that the government, individuals and the society as a whole should pull forces together to alleviate the challenges of armed robbery and other related criminal activities. It will be of great assistance if government would increase the number of well-trained police and provide them with modern equipment that can assist them fight criminals. All citizens of the country should volunteer information that could lead to arrest of criminals. Crime as contributing factor to poverty has been examined. Its adverse effect is multiple and would cripple any country economically if adequate attention is not given to it.

As crime is a danger to the economy so also is thuggery and violence which are offshoots of crime and decadence in the country. This will be the core of this subtitle. Thuggery and violence are prevalent in Africa especially in Nigeria. Without doubt, Nigerian politics has since independence, been characterized as such. The notorious actions of thugs are perceived on the streets, and homes. Their nefarious activities are not only noticeable in one party, or in one part of the country. All political parties and regions are guilty of this. Each political party in trying to wrestle power from the other or remain in power ahead of other engages in this condemnable act. Orafa Abraham collaborates,

> Politics in Nigeria has been called a 'do or die affair.' The political atmosphere in the country has been one of tension and violence as various vices operate. Politicians use any means to get into power and this is usually made manifest during election periods when various forms of election malpractices become the order of the day. There is the election rigging, stealing of ballot boxes, intimidation and threats to opponents, assault, assassination, harassment, maiming and killing.[70]

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[70] Orafa Abraham Tersaan, "The Youth and Political Thuggery: Effects on Nigerian Experience for True Democracy," Academia.edu, accessed February 15, 2024, 1-6. https://www.academia.edu/28562683/The_Youth_and_political_Thuggery_Effects_on_Nigerian_Expereince_for_True_Democracy.

Politicians in order to retain political seats use various acts that are detrimental, unfavorable, politically unwise and immature. The above assertion has stimulated many to conceive politics in Nigeria as a dirty game, because election in Nigeria usually ends in acrimony, assault and hostility. Politicians recruit, train and empower thugs to harass, kill, intimidate and victimize their opponents. Elaborating on this Abraham emphasizes,

> In 2003 and 2007 respectively, the general elections that took place were characterized by the use of political thugs to fight and win the elections nationwide…The hitherto non-violent south-south geopolitical zone of the country witnessed an unprecedented build-up of armed youths, recruited and trained by local politicians to win elections through the use of violence and physical intimidation of rival parties.[71]

Thugs cause hitches, hijack ballot boxes, rig elections, intimidate voters and create unhealthy environment that at times hinder voters and officials to come out to exercise their franchise to veto and be voted for. Many able bodied men and women lose their lives some get injured, private and public properties are wantonly destroyed. The situation poses a security risk that forestalls economic activities and development. Both local and foreign investors will not like to invest in an atmosphere of chaos and uncertainty. The adverse effect is poverty, starvation and economic deprivation.

Thuggery is defined with negative words, and violence. It indicates abusing people either by word or action. It is because of this that Rasak Bamidele, and Obasekore R. Garuba, define political thuggery as, "an act of political violence or behavior by ruffians hired or instigated by politicians to intimidate their opponents. It is the intentional use of physical force threatened against another person or a group or community that either results in injury, death, psychological

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[71] Tersaan, "Youth and Political Thuggery," 1-6.

harm or deprivation within a political circle."[72] Bamidele Rasak and Rasheed Obasekore Garuba, explain it as, "organized act that seeks to influence an electoral process with objective of gaining an unfair political advantage over another and geared towards winning political power by subverting the ends of the electoral and democratic process through intimidation and disempowerment of political opponents."[73] According to Margaret Foluke Oluwagbohunmi, "Oni (2014) defined it as the illegitimate means of seeking political power or any act of intimidation, violence, hooliganism, brutality or gangsterism, whether leading to death or not, calculated to pose a threat or scare political opponents or perceived political opponents before, during or after elections and aimed at achieving an undue political result or advantage."[74]

In Nigeria, political violence can occur anytime during the various stages of electoral process. Undue coercion, threat, and even annihilation of alleged political rivals are used to accomplish political turmoil. This is brazenly done to win or retain political seat. Clearly, force is used to disrupt political meetings or voting at polling stations. Dangerous weapons are utilized to intimidate voters and other electoral processes, ballot boxes are snatched, forceful declaration of fake result where no election is held, and refusal to swear in the winner of election or refusal to vacate office after losing election. Summarizing an article by Anzaki, Oluwagbohunmi states that electoral violence is "any random or organized act that seeks to determine, delay or otherwise influence an electoral process through threat, verbal intimidation, hate speeches,

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[72] Bamidele Rasak and Rasheed Obasekore Garuba, "Political Thuggery, Violence and Women Participation in Politics in Nigeria," *Political Science Review* 8, no. 1 (2017): 63-76. https://www.academia.edu/38200361/Political_THUGGERY_VIOLENCE_AND_WOMEN_PARTICIPATION_IN_NIGERIA.

[73] Rasak and Garuba, "Political Thuggery, Violence and Women," 63-76.

[74] Margaret Foluke Oluwagbohunmi, "Curbing Political Thuggery and Violence among Nigeria Youths through Effective Civic Learning," *Nigerian Journal of Social Studies* 20, no. 6 (April 2017): 1-11, https://www.njss.org.ng/publications/vol_xx_april_2017/CHAPTER 6.pdf.

disinformation, physical assault, blackmail, destruction of properties or assassination."[75] Evidently, general elections in Nigeria have been characterized by widespread protests, riots and violence usually accompanied with irrational behaviors that lead to killing, maiming, and looting. Usually, general elections in Nigeria, result into political instability, constitute major threat to national security, and embolden bad governance. Political aspirants mobilize unemployed youths and motivate them to unleash violence and terror on their opponents as a means of accomplishing their political ambition. Once there is political instability, properties are destroyed, people are killed and some maimed, the resultant effect is, displacement, hunger and poverty.

Political thuggery and violence in Nigeria are caused by Unemployment and poverty especially among the youth. Political aspirants entice unemployed and illiterate youths with money and instigate them to threaten or unleash terror on their opponents as to achieve their political objectives. Rasak and Garuba summarize, "majority of youth in this nation are jobless, with no means of livelihood, they are impoverished and mercenary politics becomes the way out. The politicians capitalize on this and recruit the youth who not only constitute the pillar of society but also the most vulnerable to the self-inflicted poverty as thugs and touts to perpetuate violence."[76] Obviously, the rising level of paucity, joblessness, and frail security agencies contribute immensely to political thuggery and ferocity in Nigeria. The political elites hinge on the weakness of this impoverished youth and recruit them to cause havoc. Some of the youth are unaware of what is at stake, and the consequences of their irrational actions. They have no

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[75] Oluwagbohunmi, "Curbing Political Thuggery and Violence," 66.
[76] Rasak and Garuba, "Political Thuggery, Violence and Women," 63-76.

modicum of intelligence to ask pertinent question. After their illogical actions, poverty becomes the order of the day.

Prebendal politics: This has been explained above. But to add it, in Nigeria, politics is conceived as an investment because of this politicians fight tooth and nail to win elections so as to recover and even make gain from the money they spent during campaign. N. Esew notes, "Politicians having invested colossally on campaigns and other political activities coupled with existing system of the winner takes all, want to win election at all cost. And the need to employ the use of thugs and touts to destabilize and rig elections become inevitable, especially when such politicians are not popular candidates."[77] Visibly, this encourages the domination and marginalization of people. It motivates rigging and the manipulation of the electoral process. The mentality that politics is business, and there must be gain hinders economic development, encourages poverty and supports anarchy.

Bribery and Corruption: As noted above are horrible diseases that gradually destroy the socio-economic, political and judicial system of Nigeria. Because of fear of not to be molested, killed or maimed by thugs, and more because of bribery judges are unable to uphold justice and fairness. Oluwagbohumi maintains,

> Bribery and corruption seem to be the order of the day among political office holders. The judges in charge of the judicial system are not even helping matters. Bribery and corruption have blindfolded them in their dealings with political office holders, political aspirants and the electoral body to the extent that it is now difficult for them to maintain justice and fair play while it is easy to adjudicate in favor of thugs working under their politicians clients. This accounts for the impunity that is being shamelessly displayed by political office holders and their cohorts as they continually perpetrate criminal acts.[78]

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[77] N. Esew, "The Mass Media as Tool for Achieving National Integration in Nigeria," in *Politics and Political Power Relations in Nigeria*, ed. Mike Kwanashie (Oshodi, Nigeria: Dat and Partners, 2003), 19.

[78] Oluwagbohunmi, "Curbing Political Thuggery and Violence," 66.

In African countries especially in Nigeria the frequency of this canker worm known as bribery and corruption increases inequality, decreases popular accountability and political responsiveness. Noticeably, it produces rising frustration and hardship among citizens. It distorts public spending, weakens the economy and discourages investment and growth.

Sit-tight Syndrome: This causes thuggery and violence in Nigeria politics because some politicians want to hold power eternally. They do this only to acquire wealth for themselves and their cronies at the expense of the populace and economic progress of the country. Goodluck Jonathan observes,

> In an attempt to hang on to power, leaders often create a regime of violence, repression and bloodshed. They organize political thugs, hooligans and scavengers to sing their praises, intimidate opponents and kill them if they become intransigent. The unnecessary and uncoordinated urge to control, dominate and amass wealth for their progeny in the infinite future by the politician informs the emergence of the sit-tight phenomenon.[79]

The situation is that Nigerian politicians' murder, maim and intimidate to retain political power. They act deviously because they conceive the political kingdom as the gate way to economic kingdom of their family members. The waste of human resources results in the death of healthy young men and women who likely will be valuable and beneficial in the future for national and economic development.

The effects of political thuggery and violence are excruciating. It is a part of the reason why Nigerians remain poor in spite of the abundance of material resources available in the country. It contributes to the economic pain of the people, and hinders employment opportunities for the people. Foluke notes, "Political thuggery and violence lead to destruction of lives and properties, looting of properties and massive disruption of socio-economic

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[79] Rasak and Garuba, "Political Thuggery, Violence and Women," 63-76.

activities."[80] When lives are wasted, displaced, and people lose what they have genuinely labored for the outcome is impoverishment. The most depressing aspect of this is that both government and individual properties are attacked some people become homeless, and jobless. The aftermath is poverty, lack of fund, and hunger.

Thuggery and violence hinder the emergence of credible candidates, and the practice of true and sustainable democracy. Thugs scare people away from voting and cause chaos, as a result of which voting behavior of the electorate is negatively influenced thus resulting in low participation of eligible voters. The consequence is the robbing of genuine mandate. When dependable and reliable candidates are not elected, the gain of democracy is encumbered. Foluke mentions, "Thuggery and violence increase crime rate, thus a threat to achievement of democratic dividends and exercise of citizenship rights in Nigeria."[81] When people of questionable, unreliable and untrustworthy character assume power, they steal, loot government treasury and property with impunity. When ineffective people are in power, they don't respect public accountability. Invariably and inevitably, abject poverty becomes dominant, and socio-economic development is abandoned.

Undoubtedly, government is not keeping mute over political thuggery and violence. In an effort to curb the activities of thugs, some commissions as indicated above have been established by the government to check the excesses of the politicians, and educate especially the youth on the essence of peace, harmony and tranquility during elections. On the same token,

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[80] Oluwagbohunmi, "Curbing Political Thuggery and Violence," 66.
[81] Oluwagbohunmi, "Curbing Political Thuggery and Violence," 66.

churches have not ceased to preach fair play, and the avoidance of violence and thuggery in politics.

In addition to the institutions established by the government to restrain political violence, it will be paramount for the government to re-introduce civic learning. Civic learning empowers both the politicians and youth on how to comprehend what right and wrong attitudes are and how to contribute positively to the community and national growth. J. Howard elaborates, "Civic learning is any learning that contributes to a student's preparation for community or public involvement in a diverse democratic society. It means promoting the education of students for engaged citizenship through democratic participation in their communities, respect and appreciation of diversity, applied learning and social responsibility."[82] With civic learning the government will be more proactive, and sensitive in providing jobs for the unemployed. At the same time, youth who are the majority of the thugs, and who cause anarchy, and commotion should be taught and appreciate how to respect and promote human right. Thuggery and violence as pointers of poverty have been portrayed. Their negative effects are indescribable and tremendous especially as they enhance and animate the killing of able bodied young men and women, elimination of political opponents and displacement of people.

Kidnapping, like ethnic, religious and political conflicts; has become increasingly a strong threat to national peace and security. It has affected the national image of Nigeria, and has eaten deep into every region and segment of the nation. Kidnapping occurs in any place in private and public properties, on the road, and even in the church. It takes place both in the day, and in the night. Nobody is speared; male, female, children, affluent, poor, and even the clergy

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[82] Jeffrey Howard, *Service-Learning Course Design Workbook* (Ann Arbor, MI: OCSL Press, 2001), 45.

are all victims. What is kidnapping, causes, and how it has exponentially increased poverty that will subsequently be the focus.

Kidnapping like other crimes is a serious challenge to national security, and economic development. It has scared many investors and has bolstered the closure of some business thereby boosted poverty. Al Chukwuma Okoli and Fakumo T. Agada affirm,

> One of the most fundamental challenges facing contemporary states is how to ensure national sustainability in the face of manifold and ever bourgeoning security threats, prominent among these threats is the issue of organized crime. Organized crimes are high profile crimes which are often perpetrated through transnational syndicate and racketeering. Cases in point include, terrorism, piracy, human trafficking, drug trafficking, money laundry and kidnapping.[83]

Kidnapping is endemic as it is devastating because both male and female are involved in the illicit crime. It has made Nigeria unsafe for business, tourism, employment, and even living. It is a dreadful challenge that disrupts the tranquility and harmony of the country.

Kidnapping continues to contribute to a climate of insecurity in Nigeria, that between 2008 and 2010, according to Bello Ibrahim, "The Nigerian police force recorded 887 cases across the country." As if that was not enough, in 2014 … the heart breaking news of the kidnapping of 250 girls in a girls' secondary school in Chibok, Borno state and many more by Boko Haram represents the growing incidence of the kidnapping in Nigeria."[84] Kidnapping is illicit, involves force, and the consent of person abducted is not sought. It is because of this, that Inyang and Abraham describe kidnapping as, "the forcible seizure, taking away and unlawful detention of a person against his/her will. It is a common law offence and the key part is that it is

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[83] Al Chukwuma Okoli and Fakumo T. Agada, "Kidnapping and National Security in Nigeria," *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences* 4, no. 6 (2014): 137-142,

[84] Bello Ibrahim and Jamilu Ibrahim Mukhtar, "An Analysis of the Causes and Consequences of Kidnapping in Nigeria," *African Research Review* 11 no. 4 (2017):134-143, DOI: 10.4314/afrrev.v11i4.11.

unwanted act on the part of the victim."[85] According to the Online Etymology Dictionary, the word *kidnap* was coined from *kid*, meaning "child," and *nap*, which means to "snatch away," so *kidnap* means "to steal a child."[86] But contrary to this assertion, the menace of kidnapping has completely gone beyond abduction of kids in Nigeria, adults are also kidnapped. In a like manner, Fage and Alabi conceive kidnapping as "forceful or fraudulent abduction of an individual or a group of individuals for reasons ranging from economic, political, and religious to [struggle for] self-determination."[87] Later in their book, Fage and Alabi admit "that the forcefully or fraudulently abducted individuals are carried off as hostages for ransom purposes."[88] On their own, Uzorma and Nwanegbo-Ben explained kidnapping as "the act of seizing and detaining or carrying away a person by unlawful force or by fraud, and often with a demand for ransom. It involves taking a person from their family forcefully without their consent with the motive of holding the person as a hostage and earning a profit from their family."[89] It is clear that for an act to be deemed kidnapping it shall involve coercive movement of a victim from one place to another, detention or seizure of the person be it a child or an adult. It comprises restriction of someone's liberty which is a violation of the person freedom of movement and his alienable right. Again, from the above descriptions of kidnapping, it is evident

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[85] John Domingo Inyang and Ubong Evans Abraham, "The Social Problem of Kidnapping and Its Implications on the Socio-Economic Development of Nigeria: A Study of Uyo Metropolis," *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences* 4, no. 6 (July 2013): 531-544, DOI: 10.5901/mjss.2013.v4n6p531.

[86] Online Etymology Dictionary, s.v. "kidnap (v.)," accessed February 16, 2024, https://www.etymonline.com/word/kidnap.

[87] K. S. Fage and D. O. Alabi, *Nigerian Government and Politics* (Abuja, Nigeria: Basfa Global Concept, 2017), 289, quoted in Ibrahim and Mukhtar, "Causes and Consequences of Kidnapping," 136.

[88] Ibrahim and Mukhtar, "Causes and Consequences of Kidnapping," 136.

[89] Protus Nathan Uzorma and John Nwanegbo-Ben, "Challenges of Hostage-Taking and Kidnapping in the South Eastern Nigeria," *International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Literature* 2 no. 6 (June 2014): 132, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/324953267_Impact_FactorJCC_13648-CHALLENGES_OF_HOSTAGE-TAKING_AND_KIDNAPPING_IN_THE_SOUTH_EASTERN_NIGERIA.

that it may be instigated by political, economic and religious factors but the economic reason is the most common predisposing factor of the phenomenon.

Causes of Kidnapping: Kidnapping is a global issue which is experienced by many countries Nigeria included. The wide spread of kidnapping in Nigeria is worrisome. It is a national challenge that has been confronting Nigeria for some many years. An exploration of the causes of this unlawful detention or holding people hostage will assist to know why this heinous crime is perennial in Nigeria. The Causes of kidnapping in Nigeria includes Unemployment, poverty, insecurity, and politics etc.

Unemployment has been explored above to add to it, unemployment in Nigeria has reached epidemic stage, and this has given rise to different forms of crimes. The bulk of unemployed Nigerians delve into all forms of degrading and socially –maladjusted forms of behavior which includes kidnapping for financial reinforcement. Abdulkabir O. S significantly mentions,

> The occurrence of unemployment in Nigeria in this 21st century is geometrically increased and all proactive measured put forward by the federal government to hold back its menace has failed woefully to the extent that the numbers of unemployed youths continue to increase every day. Hence, it is unbearable to pronounce how Nigeria graduates losing their lives searching for job in spite of their professional achievement.[90]

It is painful that unemployment is one of the fundamental syndromes that upturned youths to become atrocious actors. This supports the adage the idle mind is the devil's workshop because of unemployment many youth are involved in kidnapping. That is the reason why some of the convicted kidnappers allude that they were "unemployed graduate looking for a way to

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[90] Abdulkabir O.S, "Causes and Incisive Solutions to the Widespread of Kidnapping in Nigeria Current Administration: Under Scholastic Scrutiny," *Journal of Political Sciences and Public Affairs* 5, no. 2 (2017): 1-6, DOI: 10.4172/2332-0761.1000258.

survive and if there is no good way to stay alive the evil is the only option."[91] Unemployment contributes to crime and violence. When people are jobless especially the youth they take to violent crime which retards economic growth. The hindrance of economic progress stimulates unemployment which in turn leads to poverty. Most Nigerians don't like to be idle, that is why they go to school and acquire skills to work. The onus is on the government to provide for her citizens to lessen unemployment.

Poverty is the core of this research. It is mentioned almost in every paragraph. It has caused series of challenges to Nigeria, therefore its frequent mention is not bizarre. It is another crucial factor that leads many people to turn out to be notorious criminals in Nigeria. Poverty is a state of lack. It is a pitiable situation where by an individual lacks the financial ability to provide for himself and his family all the exigencies that make life worth living. It renders people incapacitated that they are unable to provide basic necessities of life like food, shelter and clothing among others. Poverty in Africa, especially in Nigeria, has twisted many youth to become disreputable kidnappers due to implacable famine and deficient means to survive. Jeribe and Nlemchukwu report, "Some criminal actors who cannot fend for themselves commit crime as an unavoidable reaction to the laws and uneven disparities in life chances occasioned by the powerfully rich minority. Thus, crimes like kidnapping, armed robbery, vandalism and so on are mere reactionary measures."[92] This manifests that Nigeria is facing serious job challenge and wide spread decent work deficits, a development that has increased the spread of poverty. The high price of goods and service in Nigeria plus inflation has geometrically doubled the number

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[91]Abdulkabir, "Causes and Incisive Solutions to Kidnapping," 1-6.

[92] Chigoziri U. Jeribe and Emmanuel C. Nlemchukwu, "Creating Deviance: The Issue of Kidnapping in Nigeria," *International Journal of Research in Arts and Social Science* 1, no. 1 (December 2016): 41, http://ijrass.oasisinternationaljournal.org/vol1/creating-deviance-issue-kidnapping-nigeria/.

of poor people. It becomes pertinent that the government should as a matter of urgency look into the negative impact of poverty and its consequences on the economy of the nation.

Insecurity has repeatedly been reported in this research as a major cause of poverty in Nigeria. This is quite appalling because it has petrified people from going about their daily business. The dangers of insecurity to the economy even though has been noted above, but will be accentuated more in this subtitle.

The level of insecurity in Nigeria has increased crime rate and terrorist attacks in different parts of the country leaving disgusting consequences for the nation's economy and business growth. The inability of successive administrations in Nigeria to address the challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequitable distribution of wealth among the ethnic groups has escalated such offenses as kidnapping, militancy, vandalization, robbery and bombing, those have disturbing effects on the economy. Chigoziri V. Jeribe and Emmanuel Nlemchukwu confirm,

> The evil of kidnapping/hostage taking has gradually scared off many multinational companies operating in Nigeria. The fear of being kidnapped, killed or maimed has reduced foreign investment in Nigeria; they now prefer to invest in other countries that are business-friendly and free from ugly kidnappers who have upgraded it to an organized business. This reduced foreign investment has caused Nigerian people the attendant result of unemployment/massive retrenchment of workers and hunger, which now ravage the people since the economy is incapable of sustaining the needs of the Nigerian people.[93]

This is very crucial because of crime investors don't come to Nigeria. Kidnapping as a form of crime has hindered many people from investing thereby causing economic disaster. This has a

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[93] Jeribe and Nlemchukwu, "Creating Deviance," 41.

serious adverse effect on the nation. Additionally, it encourages unemployment, hunger, poor health, and premature death all of which are off-shot of poverty.

This accounts for the incessant reports of death, missing, and maimed persons during times of election. The role of politicians to the upsurge of ruffians and hired killers in Nigeria especially. What is kidnapping, and the causes have been evaluated. Following will be the impact on the society.

The consequences of kidnapping: The effects of kidnapping remain enormous and require a collective effort to abate. Among the effects are; economic, political, social and psychological. These effects will be explained below.

Economic Effects: The major intention of most abduction incidents is the extortion of money. This motive is accomplished through psychological force that includes threatening the family or company of the victim to pay the ransom or lose the kidnapped person or persons. The demands are always high and exorbitant of which after the payment the company or family may become poor, often with great debts from sources where the paid amount was made up. Protus Nathan Uzorma and John Nwanegbo-Ben accentuate,

> Victims of kidnapping incidents are of the upper class stratum of the society or relatives of such caliber of people. It becomes a strategic punishment intended to pull down the wealth of the society. Most of these victims end up closing their accounts, selling of their properties, etc. in order to ensure the safety and freedom of their relative endangered in the incident by paying the demanded ransom. At the end of the experience which is likened to parturition, the victims thank God for their regained freedom and also sulk over the financial drought that the event brought to their life, which in turn becomes psychological. It debases the victim, bringing them down to the realm of priced-worth wherein life assurance depends on the ability to pay the ransom and at the stipulated condition, even though in some cases after the ransom has been paid, the victim is killed as well.[94]

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[94] Uzorma and John Nwanegbo-Ben, "Challenges of Hostage-Taking," 132.

This is a pointer to the Atlantic slavery trade, where human beings were hunted and caught by force, tagged with prices and are made objects to be bought and sold. Some are even re-sold. This reduces the kidnapped/abducted as expendable, insignificant, and without dignity.

Political Effects: Kidnapping has political effects in the society. It is now a strange anathema and many are scared to participate actively. It makes the government spend a lot of time and money in fighting crime to guarantee its citizens of the safety of their lives and properties. Protus and Nwanegbo Ben highlight,

> In the security domain, kidnapping alters the societal leadership priorities. Instead of deploying security personnel to their statutory functions, they are instead sent after kidnappers and often alter the already made budget of the state, compelling the state to change its focus and security budget…it scares foreigners from entering into a country or state either as tourists or investors.[95]

When people, particularly government functionaries and foreign multinationals are arbitrarily kidnapped, tortured, oil facilities vandalized, confusion rage in the power zones and uncertainty looms everywhere, the economy will become and remain unstably backward, poverty, unemployment, agriculture, and food supply will be in short supply as many farmers will abandon their farms because of Kidnapping.

Social Effects of kidnapping is harrowing. It causes trepidation and lassitude attitude towards the ruling class. In Nigeria and other African countries, kidnapping causes panic, tension, feelings of insecurity and weakens citizens' confidence in the government and the political leadership of the country. In cases of hostage-taking for reasons of revenge, punishment or sexual exploitation, the social effects impact negatively on the health and nature of the victim. Abduction leads to severe injuries, numerous deaths thus decimating the population of the

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[95] Uzorma and John Nwanegbo-Ben, "Challenges of Hostage-Taking," 132.

society, distorting the labor force, loss of properties and frustrates development. It affects or breaks societal linkages. It ensures societal unrest and therein makes it obvious to all citizens that there is no social harmony. John D. Inyang and U E. Abraham, declare,

> Kidnapping affects the social life and social relations of many people who are held hostages in their homes from dusk to dawn, for fear of being kidnapped… In regards to interpersonal relationship, kidnapping has also contributed to a relatively high level of mistrust among people…Few people will venture to stop to assist people calling for help…increasingly, many people nowadays barricade themselves in their homes.[96]

When people no longer move freely in their own state, the economy plummets, and poverty ensues. Because of the high level of mistrust and apprehension, businesses collapse this stimulates penury and scarcity. The number of people who die or maimed when they are held hostage minimizes the labor force and plunges the nation into overt deprivation. Kidnapping, is not in the least helping in the area of human development and infrastructural development because government uses the money for such projects to check the atrocious actions of kidnappers.

Psychological Effects: Irrespective of the causes of kidnapping and the motives for its perpetration, the psychological impact is demoralizing. Victims are tortured, harassed, molested, and even raped. The possibility of the victim dying in captivity distresses the family. Abduction induces tension, fear and anxiety in lives of the victim, company, co-workers and family. Protus Nathan Uzorma, and John Nwanegbo-Ben observe,

> Kidnapping traumatizes both the victim and their relatives or family. Sometimes even after the release, the trauma impinges on their efficiency in job areas, business, etc., which affects the economy of the state. In certain situations, rape and other cognate crimes and their traumatic experiences follow kidnapping incidents, especially in the case of female victims… It also makes people to lose confidence and trust in their

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[96] Inyang and Abraham, "Social Problem of Kidnapping," 531-543.

> government; being afraid of what is happening and un-secure and distrust in the leadership of the society.[97]

The implication is that the traumatized cannot concentrate on their jobs the outcome is always low production and the effect is poverty. Some companies because of kidnapping work half of the time so that people can go home on time. When businesses start to run half time, the tendency is to downside the number of workers which instigates poverty.

Kidnapping thrives in Nigeria because the environment is amenable to it. It becomes imperative that to curb incessant kidnapping in all parts of Nigeria, poverty, unemployment and security should be given priority. The government should punish kidnappers when caught as stipulated in the constitution, this will serve as deterrent to others, handling them with kid gloves portend jeopardy to the country.

Nepotism/Tribalism: Is one of the biggest challenges currently facing Nigeria. These have pervasive effects in our national fabrics and sense of cultural co-existence as a nation. It is an issue that requires urgent deliberation. Nepotism and tribalism are serious problems that are being ignored and played around both by the military and civilian administrations. These two terms have contributed immensely to the disunity of the nation. What is tribalism/nepotism, and the negative effects will be demonstrated.

In Nigeria, because of nepotism and tribalism competence and meritocracy are completely ignored. Nepotism and tribalism support a quota system which negates national unity, impinges on the public sector, destabilizes economic prosperity, and stunts our political

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[97] Uzorma and John Nwanegbo-Ben, "Challenges of Hostage-Taking," 132.

and national development. Writing about a speech given by President Buhari on January 1, 2021, Emmanuel Onwubiko observed,

> There are two key aspects of that speech that revolve around the loud and clear policy of nepotistic practices by President Muhammadu Buhari of appointing only his people of same religion and ethnicity into key national security portfolios. He mentioned security and also corruption but was not forthcoming in providing explanation as to why the years between 2015, when he was inaugurated as the elected civilian president, to 31st December 2020, can at best be described as the years of nepotism and flagrant breach of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria of 1999 with particular reference to sections 14(3) and 42(1), which speak to the twin issues of the obligation to adhere strictly to the Federal Character principles in appointments to be made by the President and all elected office holders and also on the illegality of discriminating against Nigerians of other Religions and ETHNIC groups other than that of the occupant of the seat of office of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria or indeed other elected office holders.[98]

It is obvious that nepotism makes corruption prevail. It arouses insecurity, because it allows competent Nigerians to be overlooked to make way for persons of the same religious and tribal groups with the commander-in-chief. Nepotism and favoritism have been criticized as being unprofessional, in spite of that, there are common practice and continue to be part of daily life in developing countries like Nigeria.

Nepotism and favoritism will be used interchangeable as ethnicity and tribalism will also be. This is so because the terms are very closely related and tend to refer to about similar situations. "The word *nepotism* is from the Latin word *Nepos* meaning 'nephew' or 'grandchild.'"[99] Simply put, it refers to the "misuse of office in favor of family members."[100] Accordingly, Mulwa, Murimi, Mutugi, and Mombo describe nepotism as "the showing of

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[98] Emmanuel Onwubiko, "Emmanuel Onwubiko: Buhari's Years of Nepotism," *Daily Post*, January 2, 2021, https://dailypost.ng/2021/01/02/emmanuel-onwubiko-buharis-years-of-nepotism/.

[99] Ruth Mulwa et al., "Tribalism and Nepotism," *Ethics419's Blog*, July 15, 2009, https://ethics419.wordpress.com/2009/07/15/tribalism-and-nepotism/.

[100] Robert Ford and Frank McLaughlin, "Nepotism: Boon or Bane," *Personnel Administrator* 31, no. 11 (1986): 78-89.

favoritism for relatives or friends based upon that relationship, rather than on an objective evaluation of ability or suitability, for instance by offering employment to a relative, despite the fact that there are others who are better qualified and willing and able to perform the job."[101] Amobi Chiamogu and Uchechukwu Chiamogu add, "It forms the highly biased method of distribution of state resources where a public officer prefers his or her relatives and family members or friends in awarding contracts, job recruitment, promotion, and appointment to public positions."[102]

Evidently, nepotism ignores merit and competence principles thereby resulting in downgrading quality. It is very harmful and costly to Nigeria and Nigerians. It minimizes productivity, motivation and job satisfaction. It encourages less qualified people to be at the head for roles they are less qualified. This breeds discrimination, inefficiency, less collaboration, and poor management. Once there is ineffective management the economy collapses, thereby giving room to poverty. The dangers of nepotism has been shown as been harmful to the progress of the country. It needs to be stopped especially if the relations don't have the appropriate qualifications. This is because when you choose unfit persons for a job just because you love them the result will be endless follies.

Tribalism and Ethnicity; is a bone on the neck of Nigeria and other African countries as it hindered several constructive decisions that affect Nigeria positively. Hardly there is any write up regarding Nigeria without reference to tribalism. How tribalism has been dwarfing national

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[101] Mulwa et al., "Tribalism and Nepotism."

[102] Amobi P. Chiamogu and Uchechukwu P. Chiamogu, "Ethnic and Nepotism Issues in Nigeria: Exploring the Bane to Public Sector Performance in the Fourth Republic," *Proceedings of the International Conference on Social Sciences in the 21st Century* (n.p.: Diamond Scientific Publishing, 2019), 227, https://www.doi.org/10.33422/ics21.2019.07.362.

development in Nigeria will be evaluated. The two terms tribalism and ethnicity will be used interchangeably.

Tribalism/Ethnicity are forms of corruption as popular clichés for describing anomalies in the Nigerian public sector that substantially erode nation building and development. Tribalism is a challenge to democracy in African countries especially Nigeria. It encourages the hijacking of democratic process by tribal politics. Because of this, Amobi and Uchechukwu Chiamogu define tribalism as "a way of thinking or behaving in which people are more loyal to their tribe than to their friends, their country, or any other social group."[103] Godson Azu, sees tribalism as, "the possession of a strong cultural or ethnic identity that separates a person as a member of one group, from members of another group."[104] *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* defines tribalism as the "exaltation of the tribe above other groups."[105] In other words, tribalism is the feeling that one's own tribe is superior to other tribes. The implication is that tribalists have a disdain and often disrespect for the tribes they think are inferior to their tribe. Tribalism repudiates any form of development, builds blocks and causes disintegration. It discourages competence, and appointment of qualified persons into public offices. Moreover, it escalates corruption which leads to poverty.

Tribalism/Ethnicity has been the bane of Nigeria especially since Muhammadu Buhari became the president in 2015. He appoints his kinsmen into every office whether they are competent and qualified or not. Matthew Hassan Kukah states,

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[103] Chiamogu and Chiamogu, "Ethnic and Nepotism Issues in Nigeria," 226.

[104] Godson Azu, "The Role of Tribalism and Nepotism in Nigerian Politics," Academia.edu, accessed February 17, 2024, https://www.academia.edu/6949221/The_Role_of_Tribalism-and_Nepotism_in_Nigerian_Politics.

[105] *Merrian-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. (2008), s.v. "tribalism."

> There could have been coup or war in the country if a non-Muslim becomes a president and does a fraction of what Buhari did … every honest Nigerian knows that there is no way any non-Northern Muslim President could have done a fraction of what president Buhari has done by his nepotism and gotten away with it. There could have been a military coup a long time ago or we would have been at war. The president may have concluded that Christians will do nothing and will live with these actions.[106]

The impunity with which the president appoints only people from his own geo-political zone, and religion to public offices portrays the patron-client nomenclature of Nigeria's political system. The lopsided nature of the appointments reflects that he will satisfy his people before extending to other tribes. An example of the lopsided appointments of Buhari is reported by Olayinka Shehu,

> Top appointment into the country's security service by president Buhari since 2015 favors officers from the northern part of the country. The president appointments into the leadership cadre of the Nigerian security services, between 2015-2020, only two of the eight security chiefs were from the south…the remaining six… were all Northerners. Also, as of April 6, 2021, a regional analysis of the heads of security agencies conducted by The ICIR, including paramilitary and anti-graft agencies based on their state origin shows that 12 out 16 of them (75percent) are from the northern part of the country, while just (25 percent) are from the southern part of the country.[107]

Tribalism in Nigeria has made it possible and easy for a particular tribe or religion to be predominant. It has taken away the right, dignity, status and independence of other tribes and religions. It promotes fear, anxiety, and prejudice which hinder democratic system. It turns neighbor against neighbor. It reduces bipartisan problem-solving, and thwarts free speech and due process. Ethnicity has resulted in people disregarding merit, equity in allocation of resources

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[106] Aanu Adegun, "Kukah Raises Allegations against Buhari," Legit, December 27, 2020, https://www.legit.ng/1395306-kukah-raises-allegations-buhari.html.

[107] Olayinka Shehu, "Buhari's Lopsided Appointments in Six Years Continue to Generate Controversy," International Centre for Investigative Reporting, May 29, 2021, https://www.icirnigeria.org/buharis-lopsided-appointments-in-six-years-continue-to-generate-controversy/.

or in positions in the nation. When due process and justice are not followed, evolvement is hindered, and the consequence is always catastrophic.

Taking cognizance, that tribalism and nepotism are tightly woven together, it is hard to speak of one concept without the other been mentioned. Tribalism is morally reprehensible and unacceptable. It is a disaster to manage. It leads to brutal wars, causes mutual suspicion and disregard for different social classes. It is a fundamental cause of distrust, poverty, exploitation, development and economic backwardness. Godson Azu states that tribalism induces, "Bad Leadership, Selfishness by serving personal interest of the needs of the people, corruption, and contribution from our political leaders-careless utterances and incitement by politicians, polarized political issues and political manipulation."[108] These factors have been explained in detail above. Having stated what tribalism is, what follows is how it is an indicator of poverty.

The implications of tribalism and Nepotism as pointers of poverty are immense on the socio-economic and political development of Nigeria. Tribalism and Nepotism have succeeded in fragmenting our national unity and give the impression that our nation didn't need the best hand for the job neither was competence nor capacity for proffering solutions to national challenges the required qualities to public office. Azu affirms, "Discriminations against members of different tribes which in turn encourages hatred among people of different tribes, which in turn could lead to all wars, and Contributing to social disintegration, and thus makes the resort to violence more likely and more deadly."[109] Because of tribalism and nepotism, incompetent and unskilled people are in authority in Nigeria. Clearly, ineffectiveness does not motivate, nor will

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[108] Azu, "Tribalism and Nepotism in Nigerian Politics," 10.
[109] Azu, "Tribalism and Nepotism in Nigerian Politics," 10.

lack of basic knowledge bring progress. Their ineptitude leads to low production, and they find it impossible to reach targets and goals. Again, people who work under ineffectual people are unfulfilled. They lack confidence and trust. This is exactly the case with Nigeria, for the fact that unskilled people are in authority the country is always deficient which does not in any way support the economic progress of the nation. When the country is not advancing economically, absolute poverty engulfs the nation.

Again, tribalism and nepotism contribute prodigiously in slowing down the economy since only people of the same tribe are in power they help each other, at the expense of other tribes. This fuels the negative growth of the economy and erodes the prospects for development. There is unequal distribution of resources, which ignites fight for power because everyone wants to enrich themselves by serving his or her selfish needs and those of his or her relatives. Chiamogu and Chiamogu assert,

> Nepotism and cronyism have succeeded in channeling the commonwealth into the hands of very few citizens in the system. Where majority (about 86 million citizens) is languishing in extreme poverty, and middle class is being eroded by the day and yet very countable citizens are daily being announced as belonging to the richest persons in the world club, that system is bound to be guilty of cronyism. This depicts of preferential treatment. You must be within a circle to access societal values or you struggle out of the laws risking death to be counted amongst the nobles.[110]

Tribalism has so much polarized Nigeria that every election there is conflict, and trepidation. Every tribe is eager to have their own people to be in authority. Conflict does not embolden progress rather it retards it. Struggle for power leads to destruction of properties, killing, maiming and fleeing which does not favor development.

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[110] Chiamogu and Chiamogu, Ethnic and Nepotism Issues in Nigeria," 236.

As nepotism and tribalism support incompetence and impede progress, so also they incite laziness. When people feel that their person is in power, and no matter the condition they will be employed the tendency is for them to grow lazy. Laziness is uninspiring because of its negative impact. It makes room for the inability to be motivated, and to be active. More so, it discourages lack of self-efficacy. Laziness causes people not to believe in their own ability to be effective. Above all, it crushes ones dreams, leads to procrastination and avoidance of hard work. With laziness, no job can be accomplished. Uhara pinpoints, "Nepotism encourage laziness because, if a young man realizes that, whether he works hard or not, there is a job waiting for him somewhere by the virtue of his father or mother having been at the top, he will say to himself, what then is the need to work hard?"[111] It is this kind of laziness that prompts incompetence, prompts corruption, insecurity and intensifies disintegration which is a hindrance to economic and social advancement. It creates health problems, loss career, depression and impacts self-esteem.

Although, tribalism and nepotism are primordial, and constitute some of the fundamental forms of corruption which inhibits progress, cohesion and national unity in Nigeria. The marginalization inherent in nepotism has increased the agitation for restructuring and division of the country. Loyalty, patriotism, appointment, promotion and other privileges are narrowed more to ethnic affiliation. In spite of those, it is more valuable to adopt the best practice in the form of integrity, accountability, discipline, professionalism, competence, meritocracy, impartiality, the observance of the federal character, and rule of law in making appointments in

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[111] Edwin Ekene Uhara, "The Effects of Nepotism in Nigeria," Sahara Reporters, January 21, 2014, https://saharareporters.com/2014/01/21/effects-nepotism-nigeria-edwin-ekene-uhara.

Nigeria. How tribalism is inimical to democratic ideas and therefore a pointer to poverty has stressed. It has been emphasized that leaders often exploit tribal loyalty to advance personal gain, parochial interests, patronage and cronyism, thereby vitiating national interest.

Human Trafficking: is another societal indicator of poverty and will be the aim of this subheading. Currently, it is perceived as bondage and oppression. It involves the use of undue strength, deceit or deception, with the objective of exploiting and abusing.

Despite the fact that it is 21st century, and we live in a civilized world, the issue of human trafficking still exits especially in developing countries which Nigeria is no exception. This outrageous and infamous trade known as trafficking in persons TIP assumed a dangerous dimension in Nigeria in the 1980s and 1990s. Today Nigeria has become the epicenter both nationally and internationally as source transit and destination for TIP. In Nigeria, this appalling trade involves women, boys and children. Women and girls are abducted mainly for the purpose of forced commercial sexual exploitation, slavery and domestic servitude. Boys are taken for the purpose of begging, mining and war, criminal activities such as pick-pocketing and the exploitation of children for benefit of fraud. Uwa, Okor, and Ahmed affirm, "Thus Nigeria is considered a transit and center for trafficking of women and children domestic and abroad with the sole aim of engaging into forced labor and forced prostitution."[112] The monster known as human trafficking is dehumanizing and violates the rights of the kidnapped. It is barbaric and inhuman because the *consent* of the person trafficked is not sought. It is because of this that the African Union describes human trafficking as "a process of people being recruited in their

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[112] Osimen Goddy Uwa, Pedro Okor, and Titilade M. Ahmed, "Human Trafficking and Interface of Slavery in the 21st Century in Nigeria," *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences* 4, no. 21 (2014): 10-19.

community and country of origin and transported to the destination where they are being exploited for purposes of forced labor, prostitution, domestic servitude, and other forms of exploitation."[113] Gabriel Idang defines it as "a series of activities that culminate in the transfer of persons either from one state to another or to a far distance within the same state through deception."[114] For the United Nations, human trafficking consists of three elements:

- **An act** (recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, or receipt of a person);
- **Means used** to carry out this act (the threat or use of force, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, etc.); and
- **The purpose** of perpetrating the act (exploitation of the person: sexual exploitation, exploitation through labour, exploitation through forced begging, exploitation through the removal of organs, etc.).[115]

For Nigeria, the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act of 2015 defines trafficking as

> the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, the abuse of power of a position of vulnerability or the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person or debt bondage for the purpose of placing or holding the person whether for or not in involuntary servitude (domestic, sexual or reproductive) in forced or bonded labour, or in slavery-like conditions, the removal of organ or generally for exploitative purposes.[116]

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[113] African Union, "Human Trafficking: A Brief Overview," *Social Development Notes: Conflict, Crime and Violence* 122 (December 2009): 1, https://au.int/en/documents/20200903/social-development-notes-human-trafficking-brief-overview.

[114] Gabriel E. Idang, "Eliminating Human Trafficking," *Studies on Home and Community Science* 7, no. 1 (2013): 49-54, https://doi.org/10.1080/09737189.2013.11885393.

[115] UNODC Regional Office for West and Central Africa, *Regional Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants, 2015–2020* (Dakar, Senegal: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2016), 5, http://unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/2016/UNODC_Regional_Strategy_for_Combating_TIP_SOM_West_and_Central_Africa_2015-2020.pdf.

[116] Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act, 2015, part 12, sect. 82, https://laws.lawnigeria.com/2018/04/19/lfn-trafficking-in-persons-prohibition-enforcement-and-administration-act-2015/.

The description of human trafficking involves the presence of certain core things: there must be acquisition or movement, movement could be internal or international. Coercion and manipulation is another factor; it could be by force, abuse of power or deception, and purpose which is exploitation. Human trafficking in summary is modern day slavery because of the force and maneuvering involved.

Human trafficking could be internal or external. Internal trafficking takes place within the same country. Ismaila and Omoregbe note,

> Internal Trafficking also known as domestic trafficking involves the recruitment and transportation of person within the borders of a country, either from rural or urban areas or from one state to another, for purposes of sex work, child labor, or domestic services. Such as within one state or inter-states, eg Kogi state to Lagos state. Etc". External or international Trafficking refers to the "movement of people across national, continental, and international borders for the purpose of sex child labor and domestic service in exchange for monetary reward. Victims are transported through trans-national border for the purpose of compulsory labor, sexual or domestic purposes.[117]

Human trafficking is a crime that shames all people of conscience. It is degrading and humiliating. Human traffickers prey on people who are poor, the economically vulnerable, socially isolated and those who are disempowered. They are physically abused, tortured, emotionally traumatized, and have adverse health effects. They suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, alienation and disorientation.

Human trafficking in Nigeria is caused by a number of reasons. The harsh economic condition disposes many individuals to jump at any opportunity to move to greener pastures, and human traffickers deceitfully provide these opportunities. Among the reasons for human trafficking are: poverty, unemployment, ignorance, bad leadership and armed conflict.

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[117] Ismaila M. Ibrahim and Ivy I. Omoregbe, "Human Trafficking in Nigeria: Causes, Efforts by Nigeria Government and the Way Forward," *Nigerian Journal of Social Studies* 23, no. 1 (2020): 12.

Although, poverty, unemployment, and bad leadership have been mentioned often. Here they will have distinct connotation.

Poverty is one of the primary causes of human trafficking in today's world. Underdeveloped countries, like Nigeria are prone to trafficking in people because of the lack of development and infrastructure, invariably their citizens are gingered to seek greener pastures elsewhere, and so, they easily fall prey to human trafficking. Adams Victor collaborates, "As a result of unemployment, many Nigerian citizens struggle to keep their heads above water. Those who have large debts can easily become victims of slavery and exploitation. Similarly, people who have no money often have no other choice but to sell themselves in order to at least have some food and a roof over their heads."[118] Poverty is devastating, no individual likes to live in harsh living conditions, where his or her basic needs cannot be met, and so any promise of a better life is quickly accepted with both hands.

Unemployment and lack of job opportunities, like poverty, can quickly lead one into the deceptive hands of human traffickers. In many developing countries, like Nigeria, where unemployment rates are high, and job opportunities are scarce, human traffickers come to citizens of these nations and woo them with promises of steady paying jobs and better life, these citizens are deceived by these promises and are won over. Adrianna Simwa notes, "Despite the fact that Nigeria has one of the biggest and fastest growing economies in Africa, many of its citizens cannot find jobs. Many people cannot get decent education and learn relevant skills in order to get a proper job. Therefore, they try to search somewhere else."[119] It will be important

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[118] Adams Victor, "Human Trafficking in Nigeria: Meaning, Causes, Effects, Possible Solutions," InfoGuide Nigeria, May 15, 2019, https://infoguidenigeria.com/human-trafficking-in-nigeria/.

[119] Adrianna Simwa, "What Are the Major Causes of Human Trafficking in Nigeria?," Legit, October 3, 2017, https://www.legit.ng/1127555-what-major-human-trafficking-nigeria.html.

to mention that even those who have the required education and skills struggle to find a place to work. As they try to find something in another country, they might encounter fraudsters that would lure them into something terrible under a false pretense of employment abroad.

Ignorance is a core cause of human trafficking in the world especially in developing countries like Nigeria. Some people are unaware and lack knowledge of the human trafficking phenomenon and tactics. Some are ignorant of the system, mechanism and what constitutes human trafficking. Furthermore, some victims of human trafficking are ignorant of the fate that awaits them in their country of destination. The situation is such that many of them are easily carried away by the picture of good lives painted by their sponsors. Adams affirms, "Lack of formal education and exposure sometimes make individuals easily susceptible to the deceit of human traffickers. When a person doesn't know better, it is quite easy to deceive such a person. And so, most times, human traffickers play on the illiteracy and ignorance of individuals and thus, deceive them into being trafficked."[120] Illiteracy is part of the problem in Nigeria. Some people are not well informed because they are not educated. For the fact that some people are not properly informed, they fall prey easily to human traffickers.

In addition to poverty, unemployment and ignorance, bad leadership and corruption are other causes of human trafficking. Already, bad leadership and corruption have been noted as the cause of many challenges in developing countries Nigeria inclusive. Both also facilitate human trafficking.

Similarly, conflicts cause human trafficking. It is estimated according to World Bank that more than 1.5 billion people live in countries affected by violence. Conflict is a push factor for

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[120] Victor, "Human Trafficking in Nigeria."

trafficking, migration and poverty. According to Anti-trafficking alliance, "In Nigeria prone conflict zones, Boko Haram trafficked children and use them as soldiers and militias. They kidnapped young girls, sell them into slavery and forcefully married them."[121] Because of conflict many people feel threatened and vulnerable. Some think they are victims of traffickers. Insurgency and terrorism have compelled many able bodied young men and women seek to escape the tension boiling in Nigeria, and human traffickers play on this and provide opportunities for these citizens to flee from the country therefore motivating economic crunch. Following are the consequences of human trafficking that makes it an indicator of poverty.

Implications of Human Trafficking: Human trafficking has adverse effects both on the individual and the nation. The individual may be exposed to the risk of sexually transmitted diseases and infections, and even death. It leads to the decimation of the citizens of the country, and declines economic progress. Human trafficking does not in any way motivate national progress. Trafficking in persons in Nigeria and other developing countries leads to premature death because of the harsh inhuman treatment they suffer. Africans and especially Nigerian women and girls trafficked are compelled to engage in illicit commercial sex, and are exposed to all forms of sexually transmitted diseases and infections. Ifeyinwa Arum and Janet M. Oluwaleye assent,

> Over 60% of victims of human trafficking repatriated into the country tested HIV positive. This has negative effects on the women who are disproportionately represented among the victims of human trafficking. This can rob the society of their huge contributions to the task of nation building. Women are noted as nation builders and great partners with men in the task of economic development and nation building…This disease can indeed affect women's disposition or contribution to the nation's growth. It

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[121] Victor, "Human Trafficking in Nigeria."

> can also burden public health and put pressure on budgetary allocation to health facilities in the country.[122]

Consequently, this lethal disease has rendered many Nigerian children orphans, fatherless or motherless. These orphaned children are susceptible to traffickers since they do not have somebody that could send them to school. Additionally, they lack home training and are unable to care for themselves. These children can later on become street urchins, armed robbers, kidnappers, fraudsters since it may be difficult for them to find meaningful employment because of their inability to develop themselves. This clearly can lead to an increase in the crime rate, insecurity, and invariably the sabotage of the government's efforts to put the country on the path of progress. The impact of this trade on the health of trafficked persons hinders them from contributing their own quota to the national development. This makes poverty crushing in the country, and the prices of food stuffs exceptionally high.

A situation where young able bodied men and women are trafficked outside the country will leave the country with old people who are weak and no longer productive. This will indubitably reduce the workforce of the country, and deprive the country of the services of young people. This has unbearable socio-economic effect on the country. Arum and Oluwaleye maintain,

> The effects of child labor transcend individual, family, and societal and goes a long way to impact national development…about 1million Nigerians are trafficked annually. The youths are supposed to be the future leaders and also the labor force who should be used for revitalizing of the economy of the nation. Some of these trafficked victims are used either as domestic servants or to hawk on the streets denying them of education which should be a basic right of a Nigerian child.[123]

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[122] Ifeyinwa Arum and Janet M. Oluwaleye, "Human Trafficking in Nigeria: Implications to National Development," *Case Studies Journal* 7, no. 12 (December 2018): 82, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/362025082_Human_Trafficking_in_Nigeria_Implications_to_National_Development.

[123] Arum and Oluwaleye, "Human Trafficking in Nigeria," 82.

This portends danger to the future of the nation since children are the future leaders and therefore could be given the opportunity to acquire education. Education can assist to secure their tomorrow and that of the nation. Also the trauma and inhuman conditions that trafficked persons are subjected to have negative impact on their emotional, mental, and psychological health. This can create serious implications for their ability to contribute to the economic progress of the country.

Human trafficking gives a country like Nigeria a poor image internationally and nationally. It hinders the socio-economic and political progress of the country. It is because of this that the Federal Republic of Nigeria has continued to put in place efforts to combat the menace of human trafficking, especially with the establishment of Anti-trafficking organization like the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in person's (NAPTIP), and the Women Trafficking and Child Labour Eradication Foundation (WOTCLEF) These and many other commendable efforts have been taken to prevent trafficking in persons. However, despite the commendable efforts to prevent trafficking, more still need to be done to intensify the fight against this inhuman crime. Essentially, there is a core need to improve infrastructure in Nigeria, poverty alleviation, create jobs, and empower the youth. This will discourage them from engaging in disreputable activities. It will in turn make Nigeria attractive to other people especially investors. Moreover, the government should be committed to enlightenment campaign to educate, and inform the public regarding the dangers and illegal activities of human traffickers. There should be interaction and cooperation between source, transit and destination countries. This will assist to easily apprehend and prosecute the perpetrators of this modern day

slavery known as human traffickers. As human trafficking is heinous crime and indicates poverty so also is ritual practices.

Ritual Practice: is currently ubiquitous in Nigeria. It constitutes a nuisance to the economic, social and political well-being, and has several implications. Ritual practice, components and effects will be considered.

The series of killings for ritual purposes is gradually assuming an alarming and epidemic rate in Nigeria. Even though, ritual practices have been in existence for a long time. Since human beings invented beliefs and religious practices rituals have been a major part of life. It is a currently a major social problem in Nigeria. The practices were employed in an attempt to propitiate an unknown higher being or for protection and provision. One would have expected such pseudoscience acts to be a thing of the past going by increase in religious activities and civilization. In this day and age, the killing of people in Africa, more so in Nigeria to placate the deities appears to have taken unprecedented increase. These inimical and appalling acts are carried out in the 21st century, when other countries of the world are experimenting and advancing in technology. Ritual killing in Nigeria is not discriminatory, male, female, young, babies, and old are all victims.

It is quite scandalous and surprising to realize that in Nigeria some educated, politicians and government personnel are involved in ritual practices. Evelyn Usman grieves, “It is shocking to know that some acclaimed high and mighty indulge in ritual killings, for instance, some politicians and government officials have been accused by arrested suspects and herbalists who allege that they use human beings for rituals in order to sustain their affluence as well as remain

in positions of power."[124] No wonder then, that cases of ritual killings and disappearance of persons are usually higher during election periods. It is more because politicians who want to stay in power forever engage in ritual killings. Good Friday N. Aghawenu asserts,

> Nigerians, especially some politicians in their desperate quest for power, are engaging in ritual killings when elections approach. The politicians lusting for power is introduced to a witch doctor by an upward mobile yuppie that patronizes the man for money-making rituals. For an agreed fee, the witch doctor agrees to perform the ritual, but the snag is that the politician must produce between three to ten human heads, breasts or genitals to make the ritual efficacious. Thereafter, death merchants are recruited to procure these vital parts for a fee.[125]

This is very bizarre and awkward that such a barbaric act takes place in Nigeria in this era of civilization, where science and technology are assisting many nations to progress rapidly. This inhuman act is against the law of nature, and negates the sacredness of life. It has caused acute pain and sorrow to many and has brought distress to families and relations of the victims. It is anti-social and should be fought against to put an end this inhuman act. Ritual killings have put Nigeria a dangerous place to live because a society that does not respect and honor human life is precarious.

According to Adisa, ritual as a religious term implies

> a ceremony that entails communication with some external forces. It includes a belief/beliefs and is done with seriousness and solemnity. Rituals belong to the realm of the sacred, involving sacrifices, essentially…The sacred could be negative or it could be positive. Rituals involve sacrifices for life crisis, death rites and customs and ritual initiations. Non-sacred rituals involve the imitative types signifying re-enactment. Under the sacred type of rituals, the positive ones are always concerned with consecrating or renewing a religious object.[126]

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[124] Evelyn Usman, "Why Killings for Rituals Are on the Increase in Nigeria," *Vanguard*, September 2, 2017, https://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/09/killings-rituals-increase-nigeria/.

[125] Good Friday N. Aghawenu, "A Socio-Ethical Appraisal of Ritual Killings in Nigeria," *International Journal of Innovative Social Sciences and Humanities Research* 8, no. 1 (2020): 119-24.

[126] Andrew Ajijah, "Angry Youth Burn 7 Suspected Ritualists in Benue," *Premium Times*, February 11, 2015, https://www.premiumtimesng.com/regional/176615-angry-youth-burn-7-suspected-ritualists-benue.html?tztc=1.

Following, Shiyaa describes ritual as, "a set patterns or prescribed procedures and orders for carrying out religious classified."[127] The definitions imply that ritual has its roots in myth and religion, tying itself to ancient practices between the divine and human. It follows a repetitive social practice; different from the routines of daily life. Ritual practices or killings in Nigeria can be classified as follows: traditional, contemporary or money ritual, and occult.

Traditional Ritual Sacrifice: The origin of ritual sacrifice in Nigeria and other parts of Africa can be traced to the pre-colonial era. Pre-colonial African societies have offered ritual sacrifices to their deities, and for some, this occasionally include human sacrifice. The type of victim for ritual sacrifice defers from one case to another depending on the purpose of the sacrifice and the society. According to Parrinder,

> Ritual killing was done in the primitive religious communities in Nigeria long before the advent of Christianity in Africa. In Africa traditional practices, a human being was considered the most acceptable offering to the gods or deities. In most Nigerian traditional belief, the gods of war, took pleasure in human sacrifice as a source of power to protect or enable the people attain victory over their enemy. Thus human rituals serve like armor, to protect and strengthen the people.[128]

Selection of victims for ritual killings varies from society to society in Nigeria. Slaves and strangers are mostly the used for this type of sacrifice. Awolalu asserts, "In some part of the country in those days, slaves or war captivities were used for sacrifices to appease the gods of the land for protection from trouble and sickness."[129] However, this kind of human sacrifice is no longer in practice. If it still exists, it exists secretly. This is because the colonialists, and with the

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[127] M. J. Shiyaa, "Rituals," in *Encyclopedia of African Religion*, ed. Molefi Kete Asante and Ama Mazama (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2009), 56.

[128] Edward Geoffrey Parrinder, *African Traditional Religion* (London: Sheldon Press, 1968), 50.

[129] J. Omosade Awolalu, *Yoruba Beliefs and Sacrificial Rites* (London: Longman, 1996), 45.

introduction of Christianity, abrogated human sacrifice in Africa. Furthermore, Some Nigerians have realized that ritual killing is vicious and infamous and above all against the law of nature.

Money ritual or contemporary killing has taken new and worrisome dimension in Nigeria. Some people that are kidnapped are used for money rituals. Many of those kidnapped for ritual purposes are long gone but there are few lucky ones who live to tell the story of their encounter with the ritualists. Saka-Olokungboye, Fapetu, Nelson, and Ologun testify,

> Ritual activities especially money ritual have become sophisticated in Nigeria in modern times as it has expanded beyond killing people or serving human parts for money rituals to the dangerous stage of using female underwear for money ritual. Age bracket no longer exist for victims as organized groups most especially among the youth and strategies in stealing, buying and selling of female underwear have emerged to support ritualist activities. This development is reinforced with the proliferation of private ritualist consultants and practitioners with the knowledge of using humans or human body part for money ritual.[130]

The number of youth that are involved in this sacrifice of human beings for money is alarming. This is done with impunity and without regard to the sacredness of life. For instance, according to Evelyn Usman,

> On March 30, 2017, a suspected ritualist, Tunde Jimoh who was arrested by the police, gave a chilling description of how he and other members of his gang abducted their victim, Akintoye Oyeyemi, took him into a deep forest and murdered him in cold blood. Thereafter, they took the body to a Muslim cleric to prepare concoction for money ritual for him. At the end of the day, the wrists, heart and legs were cut off.[131]

Other examples like the above abound in Nigeria. This reprehensible and abhorrent act manifests lack of respect for life, and negates human dignity.

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[130] N. Saka-Olokungboye et al., "Upsurge of Money Ritual among Youths in Nigeria and National Security," *International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development* 5, no. 3 (March–April 2021), 78-82, https://www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd38664.pdf.

[131] Usman, "Killings for Rituals Are on the Increase."

Money ritual is provoking some youth to disregard hard work, education and the acquisition of skills that will assist them get employed. The irony is that no part of the country is speared this inimical and agonizing practice. As a result, the sanctity of human life and blood is sacrificed on the altar of unbridled money desire. Why this primitive practice in this jet age is puzzling and irritating. Whether the ritualists succeed in their quest and desire for money is what this research is unable to unfathomed.

The most painful aspect of this uncivilized practice is the involvement of some religious leaders. This is in spite of the increasing number of religious groups in Nigeria. Regrettably, some leaders of religions have been caught in the act. But investigations have shown that many evil men only use religion as a cover up. They are never true religious leaders. It is tormenting what some pastors do in the name of serving God and humanity. They are charlatans who claim what they are not. An example will give the desired clarification. Usman relates, "One of the ready cases that comes to mind was that of the arrest of a pastor (name withheld) who allegedly killed a seven-year old boy and buried his head where the church's altar was mounted. This action was to ensure the influx of members into the church located at Odokekere/Odogunyan in Ikorodu area of Lagos State.[132] If men of God who supposedly know that life is precious, and that human beings are created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27) and that life should not be taken by any human being are involved in ritual killings then the society is absolutely eroded of its values.

In addition that some pastors are involved in ritual killings, it becomes more bizarre the case of some Nigerian men using their wives or children for rituals. Citing a couple Nigerian

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[132] Usman, "Killings for Rituals Are on the Increase."

newspapers, the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada reported that in Nasawara state in June 2012, "A man and a 'witch doctor' were arrested for their involvement in what police suspected to be a ritual murder of the man's wife, whose body was found with some body parts missing."[133] This is implausible and painful, and raises the question where is the love professed by married couples? It will not be unheard of that some people use their parents, and relations for ritual killings. This uncanny practice poses trust and security challenge to the nation-who is safe, and who may be the next victim?

Why Nigerians are involved in Ritual Practices: There are many reasons why some Nigerians especially the youth engage in ritual killings. Foremost among the reasons are poverty, and unemployment

Poverty: Evidently, some Nigerians who engage in ritual killings do so because of Poverty. Nigeria is a country afflicted by poverty. Poverty in Nigeria is growing at pervasive rate, and substantial number of Nigerians lives in abject poverty. They are incapable of providing basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing. This compels some people to be involved in ritual killings believing they will make money from it and become affluent. Saka-Olokungboye, Fapetu, Nelson, and Ologun attest,

> Money ritual flourish in Nigeria amid widespread poverty. The high level of poverty in Nigeria most especially among the young people are among the pre-disposing factors pushing young people to engage in money ritual as an escape route from poverty. Recently, the National Bureau of statistics (NBS, 2005) reported on Nigeria's poverty-index that about 61.2% of Nigerians were living on less than 1 dollar a day at the end 2003. This statistics suggests that the majority of Nigerians live in poverty, and, as a result, they could barely afford the necessities of life such as food, shelter, and clothing. With such large percentage of Nigerians living in poverty, money ritual has become an escape route for young people from the trap of poverty.[134]

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[133] Research Directorate, "Nigeria: Prevalence of Ritual Murder and Human Sacrifice; Police and State Response (2009-2012)," Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa, July 17, 2013, 3.

[134] Saka-Olokungboye et al., "Upsurge of Money Ritual among Youths," 78-82.

This is very preposterous how some human beings; use other human beings for money ritual. It is quite horrible that this type of atrocity is happening in this century, when technology has practically advanced innovation in many fields in the world. This deplorable act is contrary to the teachings and principles of religions in Nigeria.

In addition to poverty as a factor responsible for money ritual killings in Nigeria unemployment is another. Unemployment is a very severe challenge tormenting Nigeria. Most Nigeria are unemployed especially the young people after graduating from the university they have nothing to do, they hardly find employment. The hazard of unemployment has invariably induced some people to engage in money ritual. Even those with vocational and entrepreneurial skills also find it very difficult to get jobs. The economic situation, decaying infrastructure, and the unfavorable business environment, and insecurity have made it very challenging for many businesses that can employ people to strive. The economic hardship has constrained many to all sorts of crimes including ritual killing. Habeeb Adulrauf Salihu, Monsurat Isiaka and Isiaka Abdlaziz assert, "Thus many Nigerians have learned the hard way; they go to any length to put food on the table and fulfill other basic necessities of life. Many engage in devious and criminal activities to meet these needs."[135] The boundless nature of unemployment in Nigeria has pushed many Nigerians to engage in all kinds of strange and illegal activities to solve economic problems. Because of unemployment, Nigerians are involved different forms of corruption such as the Advanced Fee Fraud, internet Scam, armed robbery, kidnapping, human trafficking, and

[135] Habeeb Abdulrauf Salihu, Monsurat Isiaka, and Isiaka Abdulaziz, "The Growing Phenomenon of Money Ritual-Motivated Killings in Nigeria: An Empirical Investigation into the Factors Responsible," *UKH Journal of Social Sciences* 3, no. 2 (December 2019): 32-44, https://doi.org/10.25079/ukhjss.v3n2y2019.pp32-44.

trading in human body parts. As noted above, it is outrageous the various types of crimes taking place in Nigeria in this contemporary time.

Killings for money contributes to poverty because, it is an illusion and a mirage. If it were potent all those involved in it, including the native or juju priests would have been on the world's richest people. Again, some of those engaged in money ritual die prematurely, and some have all kinds of unthinkable diseases that leave their families and friends in extreme poverty. According to Olusegun Adeniyi, "The disgusting belief that money can grow from the sacrifice of human beings has sent too many innocent people to their untimely grave…So how desperate or gullible must someone be not to see that if herbalists could create money by performing rituals they themselves would not be so poor."[136] However, in spite of this knowledge some people still engage in ritual killings for wealth. The consequences and implications of ritual killings will demonstrate how money ritual instigates poverty in Nigeria.

Ritual killing brings sorrow to the society. It has caused anguish and agony to many and has brought great distress to families and relations of the victims. Ritual killing is anti-social and inhuman act. A society that has no respect for human life is a dangerous place to live. Ritual killing has accelerated the level of insecurity and fear in Nigeria. Saka-Olokungboye et al. affirm,

> Killing for ritual for whatsoever reasons is unique and there are widespread fear of its threat in Nigeria, where there is neither definite hotspot of operation and targeted victims, nor a profile of the perpetrators and the survival of the victims are least curtained. Ritual killing has become a major source of fear for many Nigerians because of the fate that mostly befall the victims.[137]

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[136] Olusegun Adeniyi, "Money Rituals and the Head Hunters," *ThisDay*, 2020, https://thisdaylive.com/index.php/2020/01/02/money-rituals-and-the-head-hunters.

[137] Saka-Olokungboye et al., "Upsurge of Money Ritual among Youths," 78-82.

Because of fear of ritual killing, some Nigerians are longer able to go about their daily businesses. Even going to the farm have become a very big challenge. Furthermore, because killing for ritual has become a visible threat to national security in Nigeria, both local and international investors are unable to invest in Nigeria. This has increased unemployment, hunger and poverty.

On the same token, despite ritual killing encouraging poverty in Nigeria, it also repudiates the sovereignty of God over human life and human dignity. This is because human life is sacred and should be treated as such. To kill a fellow human being for whatsoever, expect in the case of accident is morally wrong. When murder and conflict filled the earth, God destroyed it with flood (Gen 6:11) It is pertinent for ritual killers in Nigeria and all Nigerians to take cognizance of the principle of God's sovereignty over human life. God created human beings in his own image and likeness (Gen 1:21, 27); God controls both life and death. He gives life and takes it away (Job 1:21) we are not our own we belong to God. Even God does not demand human sacrifice. Our being created in the image and likeness of God sets us apart and distinct from other creatures. (Gen 1: 21, 24-25) Consequently, Nigerians especially ritual killers need to be educated that human life belongs to God and whoever extinguishes life, extinguishes the image of God.

Furthermore, ritual killing is a challenge to human value and dignity. Our being human gives us value and dignity. Our dignity as human beings gives us the right to protect life. Because human beings are created in the image and likeness of God, signifies that every human is the crown of creation. For the fact that we represent and resemble God makes ritual killing an odious crime. Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man (Gen 9:6) The dignity and value of human life includes the body,

which should be cared for (Eph 5:29) and even buried with respect, anticipating its final resurrection (1 Cor 15) We are to treat human beings with respect for the whole of their lives, regardless of their characteristics and situation. The reality of sin and the fall of humanity does not change this fact, or reduce the value of life and dignity of humanity made in imago Dei. We retain the image of God at every stage of life, even in our fallen nature. (Gen 9:6) Consequently human life cannot be exchanged for money, wealth, power and prestigious position. Life is not our own therefore no human being is morally justified to terminate the life of the other. "A man's life is not his own, it is not for man to direct his steps" (Jere 10:23) The incarnation, portrays that God took human nature (John 1:1, 14) and signifies the value God places on human beings, and this requires every human being to maintain the sanctity of life.

Ritual killing in Nigeria is a serious issue that involves life and death. It is desecration of human right and dignity. It is the defilement of the sanctity of human life, a denial of the sovereignty of God over human life as a bearer of God's image. On this note, there is a desperate need for national and international campaign to eradicate this inhuman practice. The government and other organizations should assist mount a campaign against this barbaric practice, its adverse effects and obvious implications.

More so, a favorable business environment that will allow investors to invest in Nigeria and create employment opportunities should be the objective of the government for eradicating poverty and unemployment which are the reasons for ritual killings. The issue of infrastructure decay should be addressed. When the essential amenities such as stable power supply and roads are provided, business will thrive and Nigerians will have legal jobs to do instead of human hunters.

The frame work of this research notes that colonialism is another essential indicator of poverty in Nigeria. This is because the colonizers declared the colonized inadequate. Being inadequate is manifested in many ways. The colonized is removed from history, community, and dehumanized, and termed a thief. This renders the colonized not to have any contribution or voice in the affairs of the state. Memmi writes, "Just as the colonized cannot escape the colonialist hoax, he could not avoid these situations which create real inadequacy. To a certain extent, the true portrait of the colonized is a function of this relationship. Reversing a previous formula, it can be stated that colonization creates the colonized just as we have seen that it creates the colonizer."[138] The notion that colonized is inadequate tantamount to his suffering injustice from the colonizers. The colonized is marginalized and oppressed and cannot voice out because the colonizers made him to be invisible, vulnerable and sub-human. It is this imposition that decolonization is against. The goal of decolonization is to end this colonial bias. Decolonization is ending this colonial prejudice by changing the bulk of things taught and learnt in African academy which is being rooted in the colonizers philosophical thought and grounded not in the lived realities of the colonized. Willful or conscious resistance becomes paramount in rooting out colonization. The colonized has to repel all the unfavorable situations that promote injustice, dehumanization, oppression and disenfranchises the colonized. The colonized has to define who he is by rejecting how the the colonizers described him.

This section has demonstrated the methodology, interview, economic and societal indicators of poverty. On the whole, it shows that poverty is endemic, but can be alleviated especially by

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[138] Albert Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, 91.

conscious or willful resistance of colonialism and neocolonialism, and other factors that impede the progress of the colonized.

4.5.3 Conclusion

This chapter presented the methodology used in this study, how information was gathered and analyzed. It established the socio-economic, cultural, religious and political indicators of poverty. It elaborated the implications of those pointers on the country, and individual Nigerians. Having mentioned the causes, and the indicators of poverty, the following chapter will investigate what the church teaches about the fundamental causes of poverty in Nigeria especially corruption.

Chapter Five: The Role of the Church in the Fight against Corruption

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will display the church's contribution in the fight against corruption. The focus is on corruption because corruption is at the bedrock of poverty in Nigeria. It will show the poor are as the ones who bear the brunt of poverty everywhere. It will do this by exploring who are the biblical poor, how Jesus Christ related to the poor, the poor as dear to God, and the reward that awaits them. It will manifest, the Catholic Church and the poor. Furthermore, it will study posterity gospel and its implications. It encourages the church to participate actively in politics as to address properly the negative effects and impacts of corruption in Nigeria. This section also focuses on the writer's own personal theology as a help to reduce poverty.

5.2 Biblical Teaching on the Poor

The poor are near and dear to God's heart. How we treat the impoverished is a major concern throughout the Bible. You simply cannot have the gospel of Jesus and neglect the call to the care for underprivileged, marginalized, and voiceless-those on the underside of power.

The poor are ubiquitous, and occupy a prominent position in the Bible. Understanding the issues of poverty starts with comprehending Jesus ministry and what he called people to do. According to John R. Donahue,

> If there is one pervasive biblical motif in both Testaments it is concern for the poor and marginal, which has been the subject of an increasing number of important studies. The question of the poor raises many problems, from their identity (e.g., economically poor or

> spiritually poor) to the social location of statements concerning them to different evaluations of a response.[1]

This foreshadows that Christians and even non-Christians should be in solidarity with the poor, oppressed and the marginalized. To be in unity with poor means to promote their rights, dignity, provide for them, and to make sure they have a share in the common good.

Biblically, the poor are described in various ways. Both the Old and New Testaments perceive the absence of material goods as the foundational meaning of poverty. Therefore, five principal Hebrew terms are used to describe the poor, according to Donahue:

> (1) *ʻāni* (plural *ʻāniyyim*), meaning "bent down" or "afflicted," which the Greek Old Testament most often translates as *ptōchos* (beggar or destitute person) and which is the prime New Testament term for "the poor"; (2) *ʻānāw* (plural *ānāwim*), derived from the same root as *ʻāni* and often confused by copyists, which is most often translated *tapeinos* and *praūs* (humble and lowly); (3) *ʼebyôn* (the term *Ebionites* derives from this), from the root meaning "lack or need" or "wretched, miserable," used sixty-one times in the Old Testament, especially in the Psalms (twenty-three times); (4) *dal*, from the root that means "be bent over," bend down," "miserable"; (5) *rāš*, poor in a derogatory sense with overtones of a lazy person responsible for his or her own poverty, found only in the Wisdom literature (e.g., Proverbs 10:4; 13:23; 14:20; 19:7; 28:3).[2]

The terms are essential because they portray that poverty is not a value in itself, and that caution has to be applied so that there will be no misuse of the term spiritually poor.

Furthermore, in the Old Testament, the poor are described as the oppressed, living in bondage, powerless, voiceless, and victims of injustice of the rich and powerful. Because they are oppressed, weak and defenseless they are in need of liberation, and compassion (Exodus 1: 17-21, 2: 1-20, 3:7-8; 22:21-27, Amos 3:15-4:3; 6: 4-7, Jeremiah 5:27-29, 22:16). This establishes that poverty is not often an economic issue but arises when one group exploits or

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[1] John R. Donahue, "The Bible and Catholic Social Teaching: Will This Engagement Lead to Marriage?," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, ed. Kenneth R. Himes (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2005), 21.

[2] Donahue, "Bible and Catholic Social Teaching," 21.

oppresses another. That is why Isaiah laments, "the elders and princes devour the poor and grind their faces in the dust; they turn aside the needy from injustice to rob the poor of their rights wicked people ruin the poor with lying words. (Isaiah 3:14-15, 10:2; 32: 7, Psalms 10: 2-10; 72: 4, 12-14) The poor are oppressed by the rich by plundering, misuse of power, not preserving their rights and dignity, trampling their head, lying, and by injustice. "They deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people, making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless" (Isaiah, 3:14-15; 10:2; 32:7, Psalm 10: 2-10, 72:4) Again, the prophetic tradition condemns fraud, usury, exploitation and gross injustice, especially when directed against the poor (Isiah 58: 3-11; Jeremiah 7: 4-7; Hosea 4:1-2; Amos 2:6-7; Micah 2:1-2) This tradition, however, although looking upon the poverty of the oppressed, the weak and the indigent as an evil, also sees in the condition of poverty a symbol of the human condition before God, from whom comes every good as a gift to be administered and shared. Those who recognize their own poverty before God, regardless of their situation in life, receive particular attention from him. When the poor man seeks the Lord answers; when he cries out, the Lord listens. The divine promises are addressed to the poor; they will be heirs to the covenant between God and his people. God's saving intervention will come about through a new David (Ezekiel 34:22-31; Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Following the Old Testament description of the poor, John Donahue indicates that the poor are "bent down, wretched, and beggars. … The poor equates the humble or meek. … The poor are those people open to God in contrast to idolatrous or blind rich people. … The poor are powerless people who experience both economic and social deprivations. The poor are those

open to God's presence and love."[3] This means that poverty when sought or accepted with a religious attitude, opens one to recognize and accept the order of creation. It helps one to place his or her trust in God.

Kent A. Van Til, explained that "to be poor in its most abstract sense is to be less than the whole, integral human self that God created and restored in Christ… It ties the term "poor" to others such as lepers, blind, lame, hungry, oppressed, deaf" (Luke 4:18, 6:20, 7:22, 14:13, 14:21, 16:20-22).[4] This manifests that any features that segregates and detaches a person from his or her community is poverty. The aforementioned things separate and disconnect people from the good and wholesome relationships that they are to have with God's creation. Leprosy, for instance is a contagious disease that required lepers to remove themselves from society. They are considered to be ritually impure, physically disabled, and socially ostracized (Leviticus 13 and 14, Luke 5:13, Matthew 8:3, Mark 1:40-42).

In the New Testament, following Joachim Jeremias the poor are divided into two in the Scripture, the economic poor and the sociological poor. The economic poor are those

> who groan under some type of basic need in the tradition of Isaiah 61:1 so the poor are those who hunger and thirst, who go naked, strangers, the sick, those in prison, those who mourn, those weighed down by a real burden (Luke 6:20-21; Matthew 25:25) In this sense, the poor are "those who live bent…under the weight of a burden –which Jesus often interpreted as oppression-those for whom life and survival is a hard task. In modern parlance, we could call these the economic poor, in the sense that the oikos (the hearth, the home, the symbol of what is basic and primary in life) is in grave danger, and that they are thereby denied the minimum of life.[5]

The sociological poor are those

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[3] Donahue, "Bible and Catholic Social Teaching," 21-22.

[4] Kent A. Van Til, "Poverty and Morality in Christianity," in *Poverty and Morality: Religious and Secular Perspectives*, ed. William A. Galston and Peter H. Hoffenberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 62.

[5] Jon Sobrino, *Jesus the Liberator: A Historical-Theological Reading of Jesus of Nazareth* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993), 80.

> despised by the ruling society, those considered sinners, the publicans, the prostitutes (Mark 2:16; Matthew 11:29; 21:23; Luke 15:1), the simple minded, the little ones, the least (Matthew11:25; Mark12:31; Luke 18:11). In this sense, the poor are the marginalized, those "whose religious ignorance and moral behavior closed, in the conviction of the time, the gate leading to salvation for them." The sociological poor, are the socium of the society (the symbol of basic inter-human relationships) is denied them, and with this, the minimum of dignity.[6]

For Jon Sobrino, the poor are those "at the bottom of the heap in history and those who are oppressed by society and cast out from it, they are not, therefore, all human beings, but those at the bottom, and being at the bottom in this sense means being oppressed by those on top." He insisted that the poor are those "close to the slow death poverty brings, those for whom surviving is a heavy burden and their chief task, and those who are deprived of social dignity."[7] He further defined the poor as "those who have all the powers of this world against them: oligarchies, government, armed forces, party politics and sometimes, church and cultural institutions."[8] Effectively, both economic deprivation, and lack of human dignity portray being at the bottom, and they go together. The poor are excluded, relegated, and are on the fringe of the society. They lack basic means of survival and sustenance. The poor are exposed to the harsh reality of life. Their dignity and inalienable rights as human beings are not promoted. They are perceived as irrelevant, disposable, and insignificant, scum of the earth, and inconsequential. Importantly, what, and how Jesus Christ handles and relates to the poor is valuable to this research.

The preaching, teachings and actions of Jesus portray his mission as centered on the poor. His activities have strong social implications during his lifetime and continue to shape the consciences of his followers today. The poor are among his disciples, friends, and companions.

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[6] Sobrino, *Jesus the Liberator*, 80.
[7] Sobrino, *Jesus the Liberator*, 81.
[8] Sobrino, *Jesus the Liberator*, 81.

Jeremias compliments, "By ascertaining that Jesus proclaimed the dawn of the consummation of the world, we have not yet completely described his preaching of the basileia. On the contrary, we have not yet mentioned its essential feature … the offer of salvation Jesus makes to the poor…. The kingdom belongs uniquely to the poor."[9] Jesus indeed understood his mission as directed to the poor: "He has anointed me to bring good news to the poor" (Luke 4:18). That the core of Jesus ministry is the poor is manifested by his jubilant response to those sent by John the Baptist; "the poor have good news brought to them" (Luke 7:22; Matthew 11:5) The sermon on the plain according to Luke demonstrates the same intention, "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God" (Luke 6:20) The poor and oppressed are called blessed not because their actual condition is such, but because the kingdom that he proclaims and enacts will confront those values and conditions that have made them marginal. The teaching of Jesus regarding the kingdom demands complete reliance on God rather than on power or wealth.

The kingdom as proclaimed by Jesus challenged the deep-seated expectations of his hearers. This is especially true in his parables, which contain frequent reversals. (Matthew 20:9; Luke 1:46-55; 10:25-37; 14:12; 15: 11-32) The poor as mentioned by Jesus in his teaching are those who will inherit the kingdom of God. Sobrino attests,

> To these poor that Jesus says the kingdom of God belongs; those for whom the basic things of life are so hard to achieve, those who live despised and outcast, who live under oppression, who, in short have nothing to look forward to; those who, furthermore, feel themselves cut off from God, since religious society forces them to introject this understanding-it is these whom Jesus tells to have hope, that God is not like their oppressors have made them think, that the end of their misfortunes is at hand, that the kingdom of God is coming and is for them.[10]

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[9] Sobrino, *Jesus the Liberator*, 79.
[10] Sobrino, *Jesus the Liberator*, 80.

This informs us that the kingdom of God is universal. It is a kingdom where all who do the will of God are invited (Matthew 25: 31-46). It calls for repentance and conversion that is to affect the way people live in the world. It stresses, that belief and discipleship should be translated into action on behalf of the powerless and poor people. It is a kingdom of justice, love, and peace. (Romans 14:17)

The kingdom of God in addition to being a universal kingdom is a kingdom of life. Because the poor are prone to premature death, the kingdom of God is theirs as indicated by Jesus. Acknowledging this Jeremias notes, "The situation of the poor –even linguistically –was compared to death. The situation of such persons according to the thinking of the time, could no longer be called life. They are practically dead. In this terminology, the proclamation of the kingdom has to be translated: "now those who seemed dead are brought to life."[11] Jesus never saw poverty as belonging to the primordial action of God. Poverty crushes and distorts God's creation. This is why the life that Jesus brings will above all, include and go beyond the ordinary means of life sustenance. Jesus upholds the life of the poor by his constant reference to the passages that promote and protect the life of the neighbor (Mark 10:19; Matthew 5: 21-48) Also, when Jesus gives examples of keeping the commandment, he often presents the passages of persons needing assistance to survive (Mark 10:17; Matthew 15:4; Luke 10:30). To demonstrate that the kingdom of God is the kingdom of life, Jesus gives prominence to the core significance of life: food and bread. He eats with sinners (Mark 2:15-17) this action is symbolic and cannot be reduced to mere eating alone. Jesus multiplies loaves indicating that the hungry should be fed (Mark 6: 30-44; Matthew 15:32-39). Moreover, at the last judgment those who have fed the

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[11] Sobrino, *Jesus the Liberator*, 81.

hungry will see God (Matthew 25:35-40). In the Lord's Prayer Jesus ask us to request for bread (Matthew 6:11; Luke 11:3). This means that the earthly bread and the bread of life are not in conflict. Essentially, people should ask that the bread of life should come today in the midst of their destitute living. In the biblical portions mentioned regarding life, meals, and bread and those dealing with kingdom and the poor are objectively related. The understanding is that the kingdom of God includes as its least what is most essential to the poor and that is life. Sobrino writes,

> "For the poor who cannot take life for granted, there is nothing esoteric or mysterious in the kingdom of God providing this minimum. Nor is there for God, since this means the minimum of God's creation becoming reality. We no doubt need to speak of the eschatological fulfillment, but without forgetting the protology of creation; we need to speak of life in its fullness, but without forgetting life in its bare essentials."[12]

For the poor, life is connecting with the creator. It simply identifies that humanity is created in the image and likeness of God. (Genesis 1:27) Humanity has to identify with God no matter the condition, and not be in conflict with God.

Following, it is important to realize that the kingdom of God is the good news for the poor. This good news comes from (Isaiah 61:1-2), which Luke adapted in the beginning of Jesus public ministry and gives it prominence. (Luke 4:16-30) For Luke Jesus began his ministry in Nazareth in contrast to (Matthew 13:53-8, Mark 6:1-6) He narrates the prophetic anointing of Jesus, the explanation of his mission as evangelization, the whole of his mission as the good news (Luke 4: 18-43). The deductions from this passage of Luke are freedom, and liberation of the oppressed. Liberation according to Luke means emancipation from material want, to let the oppressed go free, and to announce a year of grace for the Lord. (Luke 4:18) Luke imperatively

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[12] Sobrino, *Jesus the Liberator*, 82.

makes salvation as the jubilee year in which slaves are set free, where the oppressed are liberated from any type of injustice. Obviously, what Luke implies by proclaiming of good news to the poor is not only mere words; it means according to Donahue that there "is no glorification or spiritualization of poverty. The good news to the poor is that wealth does not bring divine blessing, and that fortunes of the rich and poor will be reversed in the life to come."[13] Luke indicates that riches are evil when they dominate a person's whole life or when a person attempts to secure the future through them. (Luke 12:16-21; 16:19-31) Practically, good realities are what the poor need and hope for, and this will bring about liberation and freedom for the marginalized.

As the kingdom of God is good news to the poor, so are the miracles of Jesus signs of the nearness of the kingdom, pity, salvation and faith for the poor and oppressed. Miracles bring the oppressed hope, comfort and joy. They yield hope depicting that forces of oppression will be defeated, and that the oppressed will be liberated. Miracles significantly, manifest pity as a substantial part of Jesus. Sobrino affirms, "The miracles not only demonstrate Jesus' powers as healer, whatever they may have been, but mainly his reaction to the sorrows of the poor and weak. The Synoptics keep repeating that Jesus felt compassion and pity for the sorrows of others, particularly the simple people who followed him" (Matthew 14:14, Mark 1:14, Matthew 20:34; Mark 6:34; Matthew 9:36; Luke 7:13).[14] Jesus is moved by the suffering of others. He suffers with those who suffer, and reaches out to give instant assistance. The compassion of Jesus brings ultimate comfort to the afflicted, and even those around. Jesus puts kindness before any other of

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[13] Donahue, "Bible and Catholic Social Teaching," 9-33.
[14] Sobrino, *Jesus the Liberator*, 90.

his virtues. The love of Jesus is not discriminatory, it knows no bounds and it is given gratuitously. Supporting Sobrino maintains,

> The permanent value of Jesus' miracles derives from their being expressions of pity: they are powerful signs springing from sorrow at the suffering of others and specifically, of the poor people who surround him. And this is still valid and absolutely necessary today for understanding miracles both in secularized cultures that do not know what to make of them and in religious cultures where what is truly Christian about them needs disentangling. Jesus has clearly indicated a valid direction for faith in salvation, that in which mitigation and final suppression of all human misery, of disease, hunger, ignorance, slavery and inhumanity of every sort make up the permanent and most important task for people in relation to their fellow.[15]

The pity of Jesus motivates transformation of the society. It deals with the compassion of God, the mercy of God, and the tenderheartedness of God, which culminates in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. It informs humanity to establish showing mercy to the afflicted and tormented of the world a priority, because of its sense of liberation and hope.

The miracles of Jesus Christ are related to faith. This faith takes care of the interior and exterior aspect of human beings. As Jesus was moved by pity to heal he also looked at the faith of the person. Faith motivates human beings to follow, and obey Jesus, it leads to good works, and repentance of sins. Sobrino endorses, "Jesus himself moved to pity as he was, did not work miracles for their own sake; he rather showed himself reluctant to appear as a professional wonder-worker. This is shown by the fact that accounts of miracles are often related to the faith of those who are healed. At times, faith seems to be the required condition for a miracle."[16] (Mark 5:34-36, 5:5; 2:5; Matthew 9:28; Luke 17:19) Faith here seems to have to do with God. It means sincerely that God is good to the poor, downtrodden, marginalized and the weak. More so,

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[15] Sobrino, *Jesus the Liberator*, 91.
[16] Sobrino, *Jesus the Liberator*, 92.

this goodness of God conquers evil. The faith in God transforms people radically on how they appreciate God. Faith is the foundation of our salvation, and helps us to discover our purpose in life.

The biblical teaching, Jesus proclamation and actions for the poor are exactly what the church re-echoes in her teaching. The church emphasized that Jesus himself was ridiculed, dishonored and loathed by the powerful. Yet his death is not the last word for the oppressed, the last word is the resurrection, and resurrection is followed by glorification and honor. "The resurrection shows God's ultimate plan for the marginalized: a life of fullness with God, a life in which there will be no more suffering, or sorrow or pain. (Revelation 21:4) Yet, note that even the resurrected Christ still wears the wounds of his suffering on his resurrected flesh, thus maintaining his identity with the poor and oppressed. (Luke 24:39) Apparently, the poor have the compassion, love and kindness of God. They are assured, if they remain faithful to the end to be liberated, and saved. For the Lord hears the cry of the poor. (Psalm 34) Following will be what the church teaches concretely regard the poor.

The Church's teaching about the poor: The church used natural law to embellish its theology of the poor. For the church, natural law has two significant dimensions: the theological and the philosophical. The theological aspect answers to the question of the sources of moral wisdom and knowledge for the Christian and explains how human reason is related to God. The philosophical part of the natural law question refers to the precise meaning of human reason and human nature. The implication is that to comprehend fully the meaning of natural law, a proper understanding of the intrinsic nature of Thomistic morality is essential. It is crucial because morality is at the core of human goodness, fulfilment and happiness. Morality contributes to what makes human beings flourish. According to Thomas Aquinas, natural law means "human

participation in the eternal law. The light of natural reason whereby we discern what is good and what is evil."[17] This means that natural law sets the fundamental moral standards for human conduct. It requires acts to which nature does not spontaneously incline but which reason identifies as good. The emphasize is that human beings should do good and avoid evil. It also stresses the essence of the golden rule. It is on this note that the social teachings of the church regarding the poor is based.

The church's opinion for the poor is centered on the preferential option for the poor. It is not optional; it is a biblical principle. It is the aspect of God's compassion, mercy and kindness for the poor and it occupies a central place in the bible. The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* states, "The principle of the universal destination of goods requires that the poor, the marginalized and in all cases those whose living conditions interfere with their proper growth should be the focus of particular concern. To this end, the preferential option for the poor should be affirmed in all its force."[18] This is the option for all Christian charity, and tradition of the church bears witness. This affects the life of every Christian in as much as he or she wants to imitate the life of Christ, it applies to our social responsibilities and to our manner of living. This love and compassion for the poor should embrace the many who are homeless, hungry, and needy, those with health challenges, and those who suffer any kind of oppression, discrimination and others. Elsa Tamez testifies, "Mercy is shown not only to those who suffer economic poverty, injustice, and oppression but also to those who suffer violence, of racism, sexism, war,

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[17] Stephen J. Pope, "Natural Law in Catholic Social Teachings," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, ed. Kenneth R. Himes (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2005), 43.

[18] Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (London: Burns and Oats, 2005), 91.

and many other discriminations. If we see the option for the poor as an expression of the principle of mercy, we can broaden the category of economic oppression to include other marginalizations."[19]

The church in choosing the preferential option for the poor maintains that we cannot separate mercy from the option for the poor, if we do, we lose our effectiveness. If the option for the poor is expunged from us, compassion will be misconstrued. When love is excluded from us option for the poor becomes alien to the Christian, and is devoid of commitment. Option for the poor has more of evangelical value than sociological. This is because human beings are created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27) It is an addition to the conviction of Christian faith.

The church selected the option for the poor because it is the central message of Jesus Christ. His whole life, passion, and resurrection. From his birth, we can see God's option for the poor. The angel says to the shepherds of Bethlehem: This will be a sign for you; you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth lying in a manger" (Luke 2:12) The manger was a place where animals were fed. This is so because they could not find a room anywhere except in a stable. A stable is a place where poor peasant farmers' put their animals. According to Tamez, "It is said that the houses of peasant farmers were generally one room. The people slept on one side and the animals on the other. In the center was the manger, the place where the animals fed."[20] This was the place Mary placed her child, who is the Savior, Messiah, Emmanuel, and Lord. (Luke 2:7, 12, 16) The indication is that the Savior is poor, and the manger testifies to it. The angels also

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[19] Elsa Tamez, "Poverty, the Poor, and the Option for the Poor: A Biblical Perspective," in *The Option for the Poor in Christian Theology*, ed. Daniel G. Groody (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2015), 41-53.

[20] Tamez, "Poverty, the Poor, and the Option for the Poor," 41-53.

witnessed to it. The manger gives the shepherds great joy, who are also poor. Paul bore witness to this when he exhorts the community to have the same mind as Christ. "Though he was in the form of God, Jesus did not regard equality with God as a thing to be grasped, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness." (Philippians 2:4-7) As the life of Jesus reflects poverty, the church wants humanity to avoid dichotomy between the rich, and the downtrodden. We are to provide for the poor, and not neglect them. We are to defend and protect the oppressed.

Furthermore, the church chose option for the poor because of their disadvantaged position in an unequal and discriminating society. To live and implement the mercy and compassion of God, the church maintains the corporal and spiritual works of mercy (Matthew 25: 35-40)

The church does this because it realizes that God does not want any person to be excluded from his love. God wants us to be in solidarity with the poor, marginalized and oppressed. To be in harmony with the poor encompasses holistic approach. It requires treating everybody as brothers and sisters. It calls humanity to recognize our interconnectedness and strive to improve the lives of others Bernard V. Brady affirms,

> In a world characterized by growing prosperity for some and pervasive poverty for others, Catholic teaching proclaims that a basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment (Matthew 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.[21]

We are to challenge injustices and alienation in the world. We have to be our brothers' and sisters' keepers regardless of national, racial, ethnic, economic, or ideological differences. In

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[21] Brady, *Essential Catholic Social Thought*, 45.

effect, we have to work for the well-being of all individuals and the collective welfare of society, with active commitment, and a recognition of our shared humanity. This motivates us to work together for justice, peace, and the flourishing of all.

Essentially, the church promotes the preferential option for the poor because as stated above, the gospels clearly manifest the dedication of Jesus to all persons who are marginalized by society, including many women, the sick, the poor, and the defenseless, especially widows and children. (Matthew 8:1-4; Luke 5:12-16, Mark 1: 40-45; Luke 7:11-17, Mark 12:41-44) Jesus proclamation and mingling with the most vulnerable is directly related to this principle because it is new life for those who long for good news. The preferential option does not mean the exclusion of others, such as the wealthy and oppressors. Rather the church upholds that the core intention is to end structural sin that produces dehumanization for the poor as well as those responsible for the poverty. The church maintains the notion to manifest that the love of God is universal. God advocates for the poor so that there may no longer be excluded persons in society. (Romans 9-11) Clearly, the option for the poor is not only God's option or an option for Jesus Christ. It is also the option of Christians, all Christians, rich and poor, men and women. Tamez narrates,

> Jesus was a leader of a movement in the peasant region of Galilee, and he constantly taught with his life and words so that these peasants would follow him. He gave lessons about his option for the poor to the masses who listened to him and the Pharisees and Scribes with whom he argued and discussed. In the Bible we find that the option for the poor is the option of the Triune God, the option demands a presence within us as God's creatures. It is the option of the Triune God because it emulates the God of Exodus and prophets, and Jesus of Nazareth, the son, and it is manifested in believers through the Holy Spirit.[22]

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[22] Tamez, "Poverty, the Poor, and the Option for the Poor," 41-53.

This indicates that the option for the poor, whether from God, or Jesus Christ, becomes perceptible in history through those men and women who have received the spirit. The body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 6:19) If the Spirit lives in our bodies, this means that our legs, and arms, eyes, and mouth are in charge of making discernable the principle of the option for the poor.

In my own analysis, the preferential option for the poor is ethical- social need that comes from God's love. It stimulates us to conceive of and design an economy where people, and especially the downtrodden, are at the center. It emboldens us to see Christ in the poor. Christ is in each person, and each person is called to a common good that enables him or her to know Christ and fulfill his own nature. These two realities help us to understand the import of the option for the poor and vulnerable, commonly referred to as the preferential option for the poor.

I believe, that Preferential option for the poor demands making love felt, promoting human rights, dignity, justice and working to alleviate the material impoverishment that threaten human dignity. Above all, the preferential option for the poor, informs us not to oppress any person, rather to live united in solidarity, and to protect each other. It starts in the physical but ends in the spiritual, the soul. Clearly, people need food, shelter and clothing, but they also need love and conversion of heart. Concern for the poor must respond to both the spiritual and physical needs of the person to be effective. Affirming that each human person has an immortal soul plays a central role in true cultural progress.

The option for the poor, the love God has for the poor, and how Jesus life centered on the poor gingered the church to make a crystal clarification between material, spiritual and voluntary poverty.

Material poverty: as noted above means privation or the lack of goods necessary to meet basic human needs. It is inadequate access to education, health care, public services, living wages, and discrimination. It is a subhuman condition. This type of poverty and its consequences should challenge every human being especially Christians.

Spiritual Poverty: Summarizing Gustavo Gutiérrez's views, Daniel Groody explains, "Spiritual poverty is about a radical openness to the will of God, a radical faith in a providential God, and a radical trust in a loving God. It is also known as spiritual childhood, from which flows the renunciation of material goods. Relinquishing possessions comes from a desire to be more possessed by God alone and to love and serve God more completely."[23]

The Catholic Church identifies with this type of poverty. That is why there are men, and women religious and monks. They profess the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. According to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops,

> A vow is a sacred promise or commitment made publicly with the approval of the Church. Through her vows, a Sister responds with her whole life to God's invitation to love Him completely and without reserve. This free response is a fuller expression of her baptismal call and is, for one who is genuinely called to the consecrated life, a means to greater holiness. … These *vows* provide for a purification of heart and spiritual freedom … Living these vows enables her to focus her entire being on God and His people.[24]

This implies that the vow of poverty is a radical call to freedom. Unrestricted by the accumulation of wealth and material possession. The vow enables the religious to serve those in most need, they recognize the face of Jesus in those who are poor and less fortunate. Essentially, they stand in solidarity with people who are struggling. It invites them to focus their entire life on

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[23] Daniel G. Groody, introduction to *Gustavo Gutiérrez: Spiritual Writings*, by Gustavo Gutiérrez, ed. Daniel G. Groody (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011), 26.

[24] Diocese of Toledo, "The Vowed Life," United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, accessed February 22, 2024, https://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/vocations/discerning-women/the-vowed-life.

God and on God's people. More so, it encourages them to live in a spirit of trust and abandonment following in the footsteps of Jesus.

Voluntary Poverty: Is a deliberate decision to live a life of poverty in solidarity with the poor. It involves renouncing material comfort and luxury and adopt a personal lifestyle equivalent to those living at poverty level in a given society in order to serve God more effectively. Groody explains that, for Gutiérrez,

> Voluntary poverty is a conscious protest against injustice by choosing to live together with those who are materially poor. Its inspiration comes from the life of Jesus, who entered into solidarity with the human condition in order to help human beings overcome the sin that enslaves and impoverish them. Voluntary poverty affirms that Christ came to live as a poor person not because poverty itself has any intrinsic value but to criticize and challenge those people and systems that oppress the poor and compromise their God-given dignity.[25]

It involves more than detachment because the point is not to love poverty but to love the poor. The church also approves and lives this type of poverty. (Acts 2:44-45; 4: 34-37; 1 Corinthians 6: 10, 2 Corinthians 8:9) The gift of voluntary poverty is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ. It stimulates life of simplicity and detachment from material possessions. It is a deliberate decision to live with less. It means walking alongside the poor, understanding their struggles and embracing a journey towards spiritual growth.

Because the option for the poor involves every Christian, the church in Nigeria established some organizations to assist in alleviating the structural sin that produces the dehumanization and exclusion of the poor. Foremost are the caritas foundation, Niger Welfare Association, and Emmanuel Charity.

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[25] Groody, introduction to *Gustavo Gutiérrez*, 26.

The Caritas Foundation of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria. This is part of the corporal works mercy of the church in Nigeria. This organization was established by the Bishops' conference under an entity known as the church and social development in 2010. It provides for the fundamental needs of people regardless of faith, country of origin or ethnicity. Its activities are divided into four main components namely; education, health, justice and peace, and the society interaction. The poverty alleviation of the commission is implemented through the four units. Every catholic province, diocese, deanery and parish in Nigeria have offices. These offices are monitored by the national caritas secretariat.

Particular attention is the justice Development and peace commission which was established at the instance of the second Vatican Council in all the catholic dioceses. It deals with human rights, social development programs in the various communities, the legal system and prison apostolate. All the Catholic dioceses have JDPC office coordinated by the National Catholic Secretariat. Its core message is justice and peace. According to Louis Ezeilo, "Its objective is to proclaim the demands of the gospel with respect to social, political and economic situations. It is inspired by the teaching of the scriptures offering precepts of justice, peace, non-violence and compassion towards the poor and the hungry. Over the years, the Nigerian Church has adopted JDPC as a channel of intervention for overcoming poverty in the country."[26]

Vividly, the well-being of the poor is of utmost importance to JDPC. It grants immediate assistance to the poor and underprivileged. It promotes human rights and ensures self-

[26] Louis Nwabueze Ezeilo, "Conceptual Pluralism in the Understanding of Poverty: A Case Study of Nigeria" (PhD diss., University of Leeds, 2016), 132-33.

empowerment and human basic capacity training to those on the fringe of the society. It helps immensely to maintain peace and harmony in the society.

Niger Welfare Association (NWA). This was formerly known as Niger Divine Helpers Association, the NWA is a religious welfare organization of the Anglican Church. They are active at the Diocesan level and down to the parish level. Each parish has its own branch of the NWA. The primary objective of NWA is directed towards poverty alleviation. They go straight to the grassroots to assist the poor directly, sharing relief materials like food items, drugs, clothing, among other things. They also offer constant help in the form of emergency management, especially in disaster situations. They have youth empowerment programs as well as credit facilities, free interest loans, and vocational trainings.

The Emmanuel Charity. This is poverty alleviation outreach of the synagogue Church of all Nations (SCOAN). It assists international bodies and other countries in poverty alleviation, especially in emergency situations. The Emmanuel charity activities range from direct relief distribution, empowerment programs, to the provision of some basic facilities in communities. Youth empowerment is a major strength of the organization. Emmanuel charity program does not discriminate in terms of ethnic tribe or state of origin when it comes to youth empowerment.

Even though, the option for the poor has an irrefutable biblical foundation, and fits within Christian orthodoxy. It has been uncomfortable to the rich. The rich think they are excluded from the kingdom of God, and are being accused for oppressing the poor. Indigenous peoples, blacks and at times women feel they are excluded from this principle. In effect, the church in this doctrine indicated that through one's words, prayers and deeds one must show solidarity with, and compassion for the poor. Therefore, when instituting public policy one must always keep the

preferential option for the poor at the forefront of one's mind. Accordingly, this doctrine implies that the moral test of any society is how it treats its most vulnerable members.

The Church in Nigeria in realization that part of her vocation is to care for the poor especially as espoused by God, Jesus Christ, the Bible and the principle of preferential option for the poor used various practical means to end poverty in Nigeria. The Church referred to here is the Christian faith based organization, because the northern part of the country, where mainly Moslems live could not be accessed because of insecurity.

In Nigeria, religious organizations have made frantic efforts, and have reached out to individuals and communities through some programs, aimed at reducing poverty. Religious organizations have provided soft or microloans, and empowered some individuals. Microloans are offered in a variety of contexts, but they are generally offered to people living below the poverty line, who have little or no collateral. Microloans are alternative to traditional bank or business loans, intended to fill the gap for people who could not obtain financing otherwise. For example caritas foundation raises funds for impoverished people especially in the rural areas who intend to multiply their businesses. After an initial training, they will be eligible to receive a loan to purchase supplies for expanding their businesses. Ezeilo affirms, "The Catholic Church in Nigeria … has a body called 'Caritas Foundation', which coordinates Catholic Church and wider societal poverty alleviation. The body has consistently fought against female genital circumcision, provided cash transfer to rural dwellers, supporting petty traders, and given credit facilities to rural dwellers, especially farmers."[27]

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[27] Ezeilo, "Conceptual Pluralism," 105.

The intention is to engage people, and provide employment for them so they would improve themselves. The loan is interest free and there is no repayment schedules. Microloans are not made to benefit the person lending the money. They are created to empower those receiving the loans and when repaid is often reinvested in the system. It is a source hope in Nigeria and other African countries. Currently, to accomplish the desired objective, it is beneficial to connect microloans to e-commerce. This is because a product based business not connected to the internet is missing a massive sector of the market.

Furthermore, religious bodies in Nigeria, tackle the issues of poverty by creating employment through schools, hospitals, vocational training, scholarships, and agriculture. These facilities employ people and ameliorate their poverty. The idea is to renew individuals and even communities by meeting their spiritual and physical needs in a sustainable way. The church by the provisions of these facilities contributes to human capital development and job creation. Ezeilo attests, "The efforts of these religious organisations are evident in several measures, strategies and programs employed to combat poverty, such as education, vocational training for the youth and unemployed, . . . agricultural initiatives, health care delivery, gender orientation among others."[28]

There's no doubt that job creation is the number one solution for sustainable poverty alleviation. When a person has a job, they can create a plan for their lives a plan that does not rely on regular financial assistance from other people to sustain it. Jobs give dignity and independence. That is why the Bible stresses the importance of work to our well-being (1 Thessolonia 4: 11; 2 Thessolonian 3:10-12).

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[28] Ezeilo, "Conceptual Pluralism," 105.

In practical terms, the Church through the prophetic voice of her leaders and organizations form a check on government policies that are incongruous to the welfare of the people. The policies affecting the people are usually looked into by the church fundamentally on the basis of morality. Ezeilo explains,

> There are religious organisations from different churches in Nigeria who have intervened on issues concerning the legal systems in Nigeria, especially concerning accused persons detained in prison without a hearing. These organisations work together on how the legal system can be reformed, so that there is decongestion of the prisons as well as appropriate sentencing for offenders and so on. They do this via a prison apostolate.[29]

Apparently, the church in Nigeria has never kept mute in the face of unjust policy especially as it affects the masses. The church has always being vocal on political corruption, fraud, manipulation of election results, insecurity, lack of infrastructure and bad governance. The church should not relent on her prophetic role because political corruption, combined with the overall problems affiliated with living in extreme poverty conditions, deteriorates whenever the church keeps silence.

Above all, the church in Nigeria through organizations such as JDPC, St Vincent De Paul, Salvation Army, Niger Welfare Association, Emmanuel Charity and others engage in food bank. They distribute food to the less privileged, the infirm, and those on the fringe of the society. They also cloth and build houses for some of them. This is done in fulfilment of corporal works of mercy to feed the hungry, cloth the poor, and house the homeless (Matthew 25: 34-40).

However, these schemes embraced by the church have their own inadequacies. It is observed that the church pays attention to the effects of poverty such as sharing food, cloths, and

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[29] Ezeilo, "Conceptual Pluralism," 106.

money to the poor without attacking the root cause of poverty. Also it has been perceived with dismay that some of the facilities provided by the church such as schools and hospitals are very expensive that the poor cannot afford it. If the government can give subvention to churches these observations would be taken care of and poverty will be minimized.

These schemes embraced by the church resonate with me because they are helping to fight poverty in all ramifications. They offer both material and spiritual help to poor. The poor are recognized as created in the image and likeness of God like every other person. They are concerned with the moral poverty that may appear closer to home. Moreover, they take to heart that the help offered to the poor needs direction and guidance from the truth of Christ's revelation.

I think the effort the Church in Nigeria has been making to ameliorate poverty is a move in the right direction. Many people have benefitted from their various schemes especially the downtrodden and the most vulnerable. The church concretely has been implementing the fundamental option for the poor. In my home archdiocese, JDPC has been advocating for the poor both physically and spiritually. Some people have been empowered to care for themselves, go to school, have shelter, food and go to hospital. Some have been employed by the archdiocese. JDPC, also gives soft loan to people to assist them start small scale business.

5.3 The Catholic Church and the Poor

The Catholic Church has a long tradition of teaching on the poor and poverty especially in relation to economic systems. A lot of this teaching is specific and deals with detailed questions about economic decisions, and policies. The Catholic Church sees poverty as a lack of economic and material well-being. Poverty emanates from unjust situation, injustice, and

oppression. Given this reality, the Catholic Church in her social teaching has framed response to poverty on some of these principles namely; solidarity, preferential option for the poor and the universal destination of goods. Apparently, the core principle of the social teaching of the church is human dignity. This means that every human being has to be treated in accordance with their intrinsic dignity and the society has to be structured to promote and respect every person's dignity. The tradition of the church, like the gospel it originates from, is always inviting us to see the world from the perspective of the poor, forgotten, marginalized and downtrodden. It further calls us to be like Jesus in accompanying them, being in true relationship with them and working for a kingdom where the poor comes first. We are significantly informed that God is on the side of the poor, not because they are superior, but because poverty is an outrage to God's design for us and he stands with and wants justice for those whom the society has rejected, relegated, neglected and diminished. The Church has a very rich literature on issues of poverty, most especially on the values and approaches that should underpin our economic systems. To trace what poverty is, causes, effects and solutions, the following papal teachings will be examined.

Rerum Novarum (1891): "Of New Things"-Leo XII. Landmark Encyclical. Examines working conditions of salaried workers, which was particularly distressing for industrial labourers who languished in inhuman misery.

Quadragesimo Anno (1931): "On the Fortieth Year" –Pius X celebrates 40 years of Rerum Novarum. Explores the reconstruction of the social order at the time of major economic depression. It criticizes abuses of capitalism and communism.

Populorum Progressio (1967): "The Development of Peoples" –Paul VI. Deals with structural poverty, aid and trade. Limits put on profit motive and the right to private property. Christians to strive for international justice.

Sollicitudo Rei Socialis (1987): “The Social Concern of the Church,” John Paul II. Updates Populorum Progressio with analysis of global development. North/South divide blamed on confrontation between capitalism and Marxism. ‘Conversion from structures of sin’ towards solidarity and option for the poor

Laudatio Si (2015): “Praised Be to You” –Encyclical Letter on the Care for Our Common Home. Francis, Laudatio Si is a letter to all people about our global family and our common home, which encourages us to “acknowledge the appeal, immensity and urgency of the challenge we face” It speaks to our need to enter into dialogue with each other, share our resources and be responsible stewards of creation.

Rerum Novarum is an encyclical letter written by Pope Leo XIII in 1891, which became a significant milestone in the history of the social doctrine of the Catholic Church. Encyclical letter is a circular letter written by the pope, addressing important topics related to faith, morality and social issues. It is intended for the bishops and clergy of the Catholic Church, but it also has relevance for the faithful and society at large. Rerum Novarum is divided into five sections and presents a critique of capitalism and socialism, defending social justice and the dignity of and human work.

This encyclical, deals with social, economic and political issue related to workers’ right, social justice and the responsibility of governments in relation to the well-being of citizens. The pope promotes the right of workers to fair remuneration and decent working conditions. He emphasized the responsibilities and duties of employers. This work establishes solidarity and fraternity between social classes, which would become fundamental to Christian social principles in the 20th century. Pope Leo XIII writes,

> In any case we clearly see, and on this there is general agreement, that some opportune remedy must be found quickly for the misery and wretchedness pressing so unjustly on the majority of the working class: for the ancient workingmen's guilds were abolished in the last century, and no other protective organization took their place. Public institutions and the laws set aside the ancient religion. Hence, by degrees it has come to pass that working men have been surrendered, isolated and helpless, to the hardheartedness of employers and the greed of unchecked competition. The mischief has been increased by rapacious usury, which, although more than once condemned by the Church, is nevertheless, under a different guise, but with like injustice, still practiced by covetous and grasping men. To this must be added that the hiring of labor and the conduct of trade are concentrated in the hands of comparatively few; so that a small number of very rich men have been able to lay upon the teeming masses of the laboring poor a yoke little better than that of slavery itself.[30]

The pain and anguish of the workers are laid bare. This is discomforting and distressing and easily instigates poverty. To assuage this unpalatable situation the pope advocates for a strong interest in class harmony and cooperation, the right use of money by both the wealthy and the poor, and the dignity of labor and the laborer becomes very pertinent.

Furthermore, to remedy the pain of the workers, Pope Leo stressed the essence of distributive justice, the correct use of authority, the protection of workers through regulation of hours of labor and providing a just wage, regulation of labor by children and women as well as instilling in workers a sense of hope for the future so that they will have a foundation for perseverance in the tasks of this world. Leo attests,

> The following duties bind the wealthy owner and the employer: not to look upon their work people as their bondsmen, but to respect in every man his dignity as a person ennobled by Christian character. They are reminded that, according to natural reason and Christian philosophy, working for gain is creditable, not shameful, to a man, since it enables him to earn an honorable livelihood; … To defraud any one of wages that are his due is a great crime which cries to the avenging anger of Heaven."[31]

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[30] Leo XIII, "*Rerum Novarum*: Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on Capital and Labor," Libreria Editrice Vaticana, sec. 3, accessed February 25, 2024, https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum.html.

[31] Leo XIII, "*Rerum Novarum*," sec. 20.

Leo reminds employers of labor that workers time for religious practices must be respected as this is good for their soul. He also makes just wage very paramount. This is very crucial to enable workers take care of their personal needs, that of their families, and to save some for the future. Just wage assists workers opportunities of advancement and income growth. It motivates workers to put in their best at work. It contributes to peace and increase productivity. With just wage, the quality of life and well-being of workers are guaranteed, and they can buy private property.

Private poverty is one of the greatest contributions of Leo XIII, he recognizes the importance of private property, but he also emphasized that property must be used fairly and responsibly towards other members of society. Leo affirms,

> The fact that God has given the earth for the use and enjoyment of the whole human race can in no way be a bar to the owing of private property. For God has granted the earth to mankind in general, not in the sense that all without distinction can deal with it as they like, but rather that no part of it was assigned to any one in particular, and that the limits of private possession have been left to be fixed by man's own industry, and by the laws of individual races.[32]

Private property is essential because it separates humans from animals. It helps to assure humanity of self-preservation, and the propagation of the species to prepare for the future. Human beings do not use things momentarily, and temporarily as other species do. Human beings need to plan for the future, and they do this by acquiring property. Again the law of nature makes private property necessary. Leo states,

> When man thus turns the activity of his mind and the strength of his body toward procuring the fruits of nature, by such act he makes his own that portion of nature's field which he cultivates—that portion on which he leaves, as it were, the impress of his

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[32] Leo XIII, "*Rerum Novarum*," sec. 8.

> personality; and it cannot but be just that he should possess that portion as his very own, and have a right to hold it without any one being justified in violating that right.[33]

Clearly, private property assists human beings to have self-determination, reason, and power to achieve their ends. It helps human beings to plan for the future and to have stability, good health, physical safety, and making wise commitment. Private property provides individuals with a powerful incentive and motivation to work. More so, it provides security against starvation.

Additionally, not only that private property guarantees self-preservation, it makes it imperative that the father as the head of the family has to provide for his family. As it is known, the family is the first natural society. Leo firmly argues,

> It is a most sacred law of nature that a father should provide food and all necessaries for those whom he has begotten; and, similarly, it is natural that he should wish that his children, who carry on, so to speak, and continue his personality, should be by him provided with all that is needful to enable them to keep themselves decently from want and misery amid the uncertainties of this mortal life. Now, in no other way can a father effect this except by the ownership of productive property, which he can transmit to his children by inheritance.[34]

Given the complex world in which Rerum Novarum was promulgated, it is not surprising that reactions to it varied. The diverse responses stem from ideological persuasions. For Some people it shifted allegiance from the rich to the poor. Invariably they perceived it as leaning so far towards the poor. Regarding private property, the idea that people work hard or have incentive to work more is subject to debate because there is no guarantee that non-socialists countries work harder than socialists countries where the right to private property is strictly limited. It is not uncommon that people in order to acquire private property may involve in unsocial or antisocial activities. Moreover, private property does mean that the future is assured,

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[33] Leo XIII, "*Rerum Novarum*," sec. 9.
[34] Leo XIII, "*Rerum Novarum*," sec. 13.

people who have property may engage in lavish life style, and vices that are inimical to themselves and the society. There is no assurance that the cultivation of civic virtues does not necessarily depend on private property. A property less person may be more virtuous than a propertied one. Despite the short falls of Rerum Novarum, it is the first encyclical letter that laid the foundation of the social teachings of the church. It is copiously quoted, and remains relevant till date because it dealt with social issues that continue to worry humanity. Above all, it gave rise to other papal encyclicals that strongly support just wage, distributive justice, work, right of workers, and private property.

In my own opinion, Rerum Novarum remains a great writing because it touched graciously what Jesus Christ taught that should help alleviate poverty, and there are just wage, and distributive justice. In the parable of the workers in the vineyard (Matthew 20: 1-16), wages were paid to workers in the vineyard, but the payment was not based on the number of hours worked. Instead, the payment was based on the agreement between the landowner and the workers. When employers of labor in Nigeria start to pay workers the agreed amount, and as at when due poverty will be ameliorated. I think also the idea of distributive justice as mentioned by Leo XIII, is very crucial because wages are determined on the basis of distributive justice as established in the parable of workers. Workers and employers are expected to reach agreement on compensation, worker by worker. Employers are supposed to distribute wages in a fair and timely manner. Moreover, the idea of distributive justice, is actualized by individual responsibility to bring about justice by loving our neighbors and doing good for those around us, especially the poor and marginalized.

On the same token, I found this statement by the pope problematic, that a father has to provide for the family. This may have suited the world when this instruction was given.

Currently, the notion of family has drastically changed. The onus is no longer on the father alone to provide for the family. Any person can now provide for the family, father, mother and children. It depends on who is able.

Following will be another papal teaching Quadragesimo Anno, which celebrated the fortieth anniversary of Rerum Novarum, written by pope Pius XI, in which he acknowledged and praised Leo XIII, for raising pertinent social questions that have perennially challenged humanity.

Pope Pius XI, in his encyclical letter Quadragesimo Anno written in 1931, which celebrated the forty anniversary of Rerum Novarum of Leo XIII, began by applauding Leo XIII for speaking out against industrial revolution that gave rise to inordinate wealth of some, while leaving the masses poor. He appreciated how analytic Leo XIII was in his critique of both economic liberalism and socialism. Accordingly, Pius XI, Rerum Novarum motivated many leaders to cogitate social issues from a Christian perspective. He reported how the work of Leo XIII was truly accepted outside the Catholic Church as this is manifested by the number of nations that instituted new labor laws. According to Christine Firer Hinze, "Pius XI commends the emergence since 1891 of labor law, a new branch of jurisprudence dedicated to defending the rights of working people. Though actual labor legislation does not always accord with Leo's recommendations, much in these laws has contributed to improved conditions for workers."[35] Undeniably, Rerum Novarum, spurred many countries to uplift working persons. Programs were established to imbue to workingmen with the Christian spirit that helped to arouse in them the

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[35] Christine Firer Hinze, "*Quadragesimo anno*," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, ed. Kenneth R. Himes (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2005), 156.

sense of dignity. Incredibly, some people who were disgruntled with Leo's defense of private property accuse the Church falsely of upholding the wealthier classes against the proletariat. In spite of the fact that some were leery and suspicious of workers associations prior to *Rerum Novarum*, many clergy and lay persons have since sacrificed much to provide organized support for underprivileged workers and their welfare.

I believe this notion that many clergy and lay persons have sacrificed to provide support for underprivileged workers is very paramount. This is because in Nigeria clergy men support underprivileged workers by donating money to organizations whose mission is to end economic disparities. As money comes, these organizations put the funds towards fixing housing inequalities, education gaps, food insecurities and more. Again, both the clergy and lay, have involved themselves in giving information about available resources on how to reduce poverty. They organize job training and placement services to assist underprivileged individuals. It includes training in specific skills such as computer programming, nursing, tailoring and baking.

Pius XI, after articulating the core messages of *Rerum Novarum*, promotes and gave succinct clarifications on private property, just wage and workers association. Pius noted the dual aspects of ownership, individual and social. It is a right given by the creator to enable individuals to care and provide the needs of their families. By it, the goods which the creator has destined for the human race may truly serve its purpose. Pius indicates,

> It follows from what We have termed the individual and at the same time social character of ownership, that men must consider in this matter not only their own advantage but also the common good. To define these duties in detail when necessity requires and the natural law has not done so, is the function of those in charge of the State. Therefore, public authority, under the guiding light always of the natural and divine law, can

> determine more accurately upon consideration of the true requirements of the common good, what is permitted and what is not permitted to owners in the use of their property.[36]

This means that those who deny individual ownership of property may easily fall into collectivism. Private property as already noted gives an individual stability and assurance of the future. It helps an individual to take care of himself or herself and also provide for the family. Private property demands being circumspect because the fruits of the land ought to be distributed for the benefits of all. The collective aspect of property requires owners to take into account not only their advantage but the common good. To regulate the duties attached to common good is specifically the work of the government. In doing this both the natural and divine laws must be taken into consideration. This is done to avoid undue abuse.

The just distribution of wealth provides a transition to Pius XI discussion of just wage. He established the things that would be observed in determining appropriate wage for employees. The needs of the worker and his family, the condition of the business, the public economic good, and the relation of wages to those of other workers as well as the goods being sold. Pius XI demonstrates,

> In determining the amount of the wage, the condition of a business and of the one carrying it on must also be taken into account; for it would be unjust to demand excessive wages which a business cannot stand without its ruin and consequent calamity to the workers. If, however, a business makes too little money, because of lack of energy or lack of initiative or because of indifference to technical and economic progress, that must not be regarded a just reason for reducing the compensation of the workers.[37]

Just wage does not mean that other members of the family will not contribute to the welfare of the family. Rather it entails that the rest of the family should also contribute to the common

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[36] Pius XI, "*Quadragesimo Anno*: Encyclical of Pope Pius XI on Reconstruction of the Social Order," Libreria Editrice Vaticana, sec. 49, accessed February 25, 2024, https://www.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19310515_quadragesimo-anno.html.

[37] Pius XI, "*Quadragesimo Anno*," sec. 72.

support, according to their capacity. In assisting the family, children and women are not to be abused because of their limited power.

Pius XI embellishment of Rerum Novarum, not only stimulated him to discuss just wage. It embolden him to defend, and uphold the condition of workers. He explains that without workers union or association the state is left to deal directly with individuals. The consequence of this is that the voice of the impoverished will not be heard, and the responsibilities of the state will become overburdening. Pius XI describes,

> With respect to the founding of these societies, the Encyclical *On the Condition of Workers* most fittingly declared that "workers' associations ought to be so constituted and so governed as to furnish the most suitable and most convenient means to attain the object proposed, which consists in this, that the individual members of the association secure, so far as is possible, an increase in the goods of body, of soul, and of property," yet it is clear that "moral and religious perfection ought to be regarded as their principal goal, and that their social organization as such ought above all to be directed completely by this goal."[38]

The intention is that with workers' association, social classes will be minimized, individual needs will be more appreciated. Essentially, state leaders will be freed from performing tasks that belong to workers association.

Some people applauded this clarion call, and clarification by Pius X1 as timely, the voice of God, and a voice that speaks for the voiceless, the marginalized and the wretch of the earth. But those who are skeptical about it, questioned the Church's authority in setting economic rules. They further argued that the Church is anti-capitalism. According to Christine Firer Hinze, "Some who read the encyclical as an unfair attack on capitalism questioned whether 'a Church is within its proper sphere when it attempts to prescribe economic regulations,' and concluded: 'It

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[38] Pius XI, "*Quadragesimo Anno*," sec. 32.

is not the business of any Church to go so deeply into the practical application of the rules of justice.'"[39] In spite of the position of the skeptics, *Quadragesimo Anno* is well articulated and sufficiently informative. It gave solutions to economic challenges that are ever relevant to this present age.

In my own opinion, the statement that the church within its proper sphere should not prescribe economic regulations is very problematic. It is challenging because the church is in the world, but not of the world. This gives the church the audacity to speak out against unjust principles. The church wants justice to be done in every aspect of human life. The church cannot keep silent when unjust economic laws are promulgated. Even Jesus Christ himself challenged those buying and selling in the temple. (Mark 11:15-19) The Church following her master will always oppose unjust situation.

To manifest the significance, validity and the connection of both *Rerum Novarum* and *Quadragesimo Anno*, Pope Paul VI in 1967, wrote the encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, which addressed the world economy and its effect on peoples around the world. He wrote at a time when many nations suffered excessively because their economic progress was grounded, while some other nations flourished economically. Like other encyclicals before it, *Populorum Progressio* discussed extensively, the necessity of work, rights of workers to just wage, job security, appreciable working conditions, and workers association. The progress of the nations and peoples is of utmost importance to the Church. As always the Church is concerned about the hungry, poverty, disease, ignorance, and unemployment. Paul VI establishes,

> True to the teaching and example of her divine Founder, who cited the preaching of the Gospel to the poor as a sign of His mission, the Church has never failed to foster the

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[39] Hinze, "*Quadragesimo anno*," 168.

> human progress of the nations to which she brings faith in Christ. Besides erecting sacred edifices, her missionaries have also promoted construction of hospitals, sanitariums, schools and universities. By teaching the native population how to take full advantage of natural resources, the missionaries often protected them from the greed of foreigners.[40]

This is an indication that the Church in addition to her missionary activities is also involved in economic and social development. As stated, the establishment of hospitals, and schools have been foremost in the mission of the Church. This done especially to assist the poor and the downtrodden and for the progress of humanity.

Paul VI, building on the foundation of *Rerum Novarum*, alludes to the essence of solidarity. He admonished affluent nations, to help other nations that are crumbling economically. He bemoaned the chasm between the rich and the poor as one factor that causes restiveness. Paul VI sees this as a necessity that will help to curb poverty and incessant conflict in the world. He makes an honest appeal that those blessed with abundance should help peoples in hunger. Paul VI attests,

> Development of the individual necessarily entails a joint effort for the development of the human race as a whole. At Bombay We said: "Man must meet man, nation must meet nation, as brothers and sisters, as children of God. In this mutual understanding and friendship, in this sacred communion, we must also begin to work together to build the common future of the human race."[41]

The act of richer nations helping developing nations stems from social justice. It will checkmate the nations that make progress at the detriment of others. It will bring about a world that is more human towards all men, where all will be able to give and receive. This principle of giving to developing nations will encourage civilization of the world.

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[40] Paul VI, "*Populorum Progressio*: Encyclical of Pope Paul VI on the Development of Peoples, March 26, 1967," Libreria Editrice Vaticana, sec. 12, accessed February 25, 2024, https://www.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_26031967_populorum.html.

[41] Paul VI, "*Populorum Progressio*," sec. 43.

Civilization of the world and economic progress will be realized when education is a priority. When people are able to read and write they will be able to make progress. They will articulate things easily, and be able to process information. But when people are without knowledge it becomes difficult for them to accomplish any type of progress. Paul VI corroborates,

> We can even say that economic growth is dependent on social progress, the goal to which it aspires; and that basic education is the first objective for any nation seeking to develop itself. Lack of education is as serious as lack of food; the illiterate is a starved spirit. When someone learns how to read and write, he is equipped to do a job and to shoulder a profession, to develop self-confidence and realize that he can progress along with others.[42]

Education enhances and inspires progress. It is the key to personal enrichment and social integration. It brings permanent change in the thinking abilities of people and make them be able to do certain things while differentiating between what is right and what is wrong. It gives people courage, and self- assurance to improve themselves and to face challenges in life.

Populorum Progressio, like *Rerum Novarum*, was not well received by some people. Like the supporters of the free market economy. They believed that the pope brutally attacked it, and did not explain very well what development means. Allan Figueroa Deck writes,

> These proponents claim that he was misinformed regarding the facts of the economic development and how markets work. They maintained that the encyclical tilts too much in the direction of state intervention in the development process, and that it naively assumes that centralized authority can do more than experience has shown to ameliorate economic inequality.[43]

Because of Paul VI's narrative, some felt his writing could incite the poor to revolt. On the one hand, the sceptics of this encyclical were surprised that it was well received in many places, like

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[42] Paul VI, "*Populorum Progressio*," sec. 35.

[43] Allan Figueroa Deck, "*Populorum progressio*," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, ed. Kenneth R. Himes (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2005), 308.

France, Latin America, by bishops of America, and by other bishops and political leaders in other parts of the world. They alluded that it stated the fundamental truth about poverty. It also uncovered the real living condition of some people. More so, they perceived the encyclical as timely because it addressed all men and women of good will and the logical need for true solidarity among human beings. This encyclical remains a master piece because subsequent encyclicals will enhance it in discussing development and human progress.

In my opinion, this papal teaching touched the heart of catholic social teaching. Its recommendation that richer nations should help developing nations is the core of teaching of Jesus Christ in Matthew 25: 31-46: "I was hungry and you gave me to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me to drink. I was naked and you clothed me." The less privileged nations are in dire need. The affluent nations helping poor nations is the practical means of accomplishing the gospel of Jesus Christ. More so, I think by the richer nations helping developing nations, they will improvement their infrastructure, embrace education, hunger will be reduced and civilization will be promoted. When civilization is improved, poverty will be minimized, and human solidarity will be attained.

To demonstrate the essence of *Populorum progressio* and other encyclicals before it, Pope John Paul II issued his seventh encyclical called *Sollicitudo rei socialis* (On Social Concern), which commemorates the twentieth anniversary of Paul VI letter on development, called *Populorum progressio*. Consequently, like Paul VI's letter, John Paul II's document focused on the issue of human development. The ensuing twenty years since the publication of *Populorum progressio* found the poor of the world still desperate. He further points out that the gap between developed and developing countries continued to widened in a variety of areas, including: the production of and distribution of goods, hygiene, health and housing, availability

of drinking water, and working condition especially for women, lack of adequate housing, unemployment and international debt all threaten humanity. John Paul II notes,

> The abundance of goods and services available in some parts of the world, particularly in the developed North, is matched in the South by an unacceptable delay, and it is precisely in this geopolitical area that the major part of the human race lives.
>
> Looking at all the various sectors—the production and distribution of foodstuffs, hygiene, health and housing, availability of drinking water, working conditions (especially for women), life expectancy and other economic and social indicators—the general picture is a disappointing one, both considered in itself and in relation to the corresponding data of the more developed countries. The word "gap" returns spontaneously to mind.[44]

The emphasis is still that developed countries are economically progressing rapidly, whereas developing countries are almost stagnant in their economic progress. This situation is not healthy. It makes progress lopsided, it increases poverty, and multiplies the number of poor people in the world. It leaves many in the south very vulnerable and oppressed. This is exactly what all the social encyclical letters beginning from *Rerum Novarum* have been fighting against. How to minimize the conditions and factors that aggravate poverty, and how to close the gap between the rich and the poor. This odd incompatible gap, is disturbing, and stimulates illiteracy, and makes it inevitable that some people will be without education which is the primary step to development.

John Paul II accentuated further, as did *Rerum Novarum* and *Populorum progressio*, the essence of solidarity which accelerates development, and minimizes the gap between those with abundance and the have nots. He reiterates that it is a very crucial Christian virtue that should be imbibe by humanity. He maintains that it has a nexus with charity which makes it an outstanding

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[44] John Paul II, "*Sollicitudo rei socialis*," Libreria Editrice Vaticana, sec. 14, accessed February 25, 2024, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_30121987_sollicitudo-rei-socialis.html.

identity of Christ disciples. It is a virtue that assists humanity to accomplish the divine objective both on the individual, national and international levels. John Paul II explicates,

> Solidarity is undoubtedly a Christian virtue. In what has been said so far it has been possible to identify many points of contact between solidarity and charity, which is the distinguishing mark of Christ's disciples (cf. Jn 13:35). In the light of faith, solidarity seeks to go beyond itself, to take on the specifically Christian dimension of total gratuity, forgiveness and reconciliation. One's neighbor is then not only a human being with his or her own rights and a fundamental equality with everyone else, but becomes the living image of God the Father, redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ and placed under the permanent action of the Holy Spirit. One's neighbor must therefore be loved, even if an enemy, with the same love with which the Lord loves him or her; and for that person's sake one must be ready for sacrifice, even the ultimate one: to lay down one's life for the brethren (cf. 1 Jn 3:16).[45]

Solidarity makes us be conscious of our common fatherhood of God, and of the brotherhood we share in Christ. Humanity's solidarity goes beyond our human and natural bonds. It is delineated from the light of faith a new model of the unity of the human race, which must be ultimately inspire our solidarity. With this type of solidarity human beings would benefit from development and harmony.

Solidarity, heightens development when it is embraced with Christian faith. To accomplish this certain issues that have hindered development would be mentioned and solution proffered. John Paul II indicates that lack of housing, unemployment and underemployment are challenges experienced universally. The situation is tragic and unless confronted development will be remote for some nations and people. John Paul II emphasizes,

> The lack of housing is being experienced universally and is due in large measure to the growing phenomenon of urbanization. Even the most highly developed peoples present the sad spectacle of individuals and families literally struggling to survive, without a roof over their heads or with a roof so inadequate as to constitute no roof at all. . . .
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> Another indicator common to the vast majority of nations is the phenomenon of unemployment and underemployment.

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[45] John Paul II, "*Sollicitudo rei socialis*," sec. 40.

> Everyone recognizes the reality and growing seriousness of this problem in the industrialized countries. While it is alarming in the developing countries, . . . , in the countries of high economic development the sources of work seem to be shrinking.[46]

These problems have been alluded to by the encyclical letters before *Sollicitudo rei socialis*. Because of their unimaginable consequences for individuals and for society. They humiliate, lead to loss of self-esteem which every human being abhors. This grave situation raises serious question what type of development is the world following? Is the world developing to care for the poor, or developing to care for the rich?

As a follow-up to *Populorum progressio*, John Paul II mentioned international debt and terrorism as factors hindering development currently. Even though not every country is involved in borrowing but countries that have been borrowing are not developing. They are not progressing because circumstances have changed both for the debtor and the lending nations. John Paul II insists,

> Circumstances have changed, both within the debtor nations and in the international financial market; the instrument chosen to make a contribution to development has turned into a counterproductive mechanism. This is because the debtor nations, in order to service their debt, find themselves obliged to export the capital needed for improving or at least maintaining their standard of living. It is also because, for the same reason, they are unable to obtain new and equally essential financing.[47]

The fact that debtor nations cannot service their debts, inhibits development. Debtor nations cannot improve their infrastructure, neither can they build new ones. This situation hinders development, increases unemployment, and makes the debtor nations to always be cap in hand asking for more. The negative impact of international debt has obligatorily forced the Church to

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[46] John Paul II, "*Sollicitudo rei socialis*," sec. 17-18.
[47] John Paul II, "*Sollicitudo Rei socialis*," sec. 19.

ask for debt forgiveness to enable development and improvement of humanity manifesting our common brotherhood in Christ.

Overall, John Paul II, and others before him succeeded in raising critical questions about poverty, development, and solidarity. John Paul II, challenged the ideology of blocs and development theory and its capitalistic form of super development. Some people perceived the papal letter as wide ranging and compelling analysis of the continuing lag in the third world development. Others see it as a hard honest criticism of the super powers. Those who took offense at the papal teaching believed the document was guilty of being too evenhanded in the treatment of the superpower. According to Charles Curran, Kenneth R. Himes, and Thomas A. Shannon, the papal critics maintained that "a necessary distinction between East and West had to be made, the Soviet side being far more morally flawed."[48] The critics, especially William Safire, identify the pope "as trying to win favor with third world nations by use of 'the rhetoric of resentment.' A U.S. representative to the United Nations also wondered whether it was fair to put all blame for poverty at the feet of the rich nations."[49]

I perceive the statement by William Safire as problematic. It is challenging because I think he did not give critical appraisal of how the pope was trying to win favor with the third world. The pope was not prejudiced or bias in his teaching. His instruction was innocuous said with Christian charity. He was simply advocating that the nations with abundance should assist those with little resources. In fairness, the nations with least resources are third world countries. Advocating for them does in any way portray currying favor. Helping them to develop is the best

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[48] Charles E. Curran, Kenneth R. Himes, and Thomas A. Shannon, "*Sollicitudo rei socialis*," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, ed. Kenneth R. Himes (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2005), 431.

[49] Curran, Himes, and Shannon, "*Sollicitudo rei socialis*," 431.

thing that will happen to the world, because it will minimize borrowing, dependence syndrome, and curtail migration.

On the whole, the papal teaching explained in detail what is development, factors hindering development, and what would be done so as to achieve development for the progress of all, and this manifests our solidarity as children of God.

As John Paul II explored the dangers of unemployment, underemployment, inadequate housing, international debt and terrorism as impeding development, so did Pope Francis in his papal letter *Laudatio si*. He examined ecological and environmental crisis as hampering development. Francis calls for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. He regrets that the several efforts to seek concrete solutions to the environmental crisis have proved ineffective, and this is fundamentally because of lack of interest. He laments how denial, indifference, nonchalant resignation and blind confidence in technical solutions are escalating the problem. Francis reports,

> It is my hope that this Encyclical Letter, which is now added to the body of the Church's social teaching, can help us to acknowledge the appeal, immensity and urgency of the challenge we face. I will begin by briefly reviewing several aspects of the present ecological crisis, with the aim of drawing on the results of the best scientific research available today, letting them touch us deeply and provide a concrete foundation for the ethical and spiritual itinerary that follows.[50]

Francis wants everybody to know about the reality and adverse effects of climate change. The hazard it is causing in the entire universe. He calls to mind that denying the fact will worsen the

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[50] Francis, "Encyclical Letter *Laudatio si'* of the Holy Father Francis on Care for Our Common Home," Libreria Editrice Vaticana, sec. 15, accessed February 25, 2024, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html.

situation, because it may arouse the extinction of the earth. He will appreciate that all will be attentive to the root cause, as to provide a panacea to the problem.

Francis, following the tradition of the other popes, notes that pollution, waste, and the throwaway culture are among the things that hamper development and cause poverty in the world. This is so because pollution and waste have several hostile effects that if not checked would cause environmental hazards. Francis narrates,

> Some forms of pollution are part of people's daily experience. Exposure to atmospheric pollutants produces a broad spectrum of health hazards, especially for the poor, and causes millions of premature deaths. People take sick, for example, from breathing high levels of smoke from fuels used in cooking or heating. There is also pollution that affects everyone, caused by transport, industrial fumes, substances which contribute to the acidification of soil and water, fertilizers, insecticides, fungicides, herbicides and agrotoxins in general.[51]

Waste, pollution are inimical to human beings even to other creatures. The negative effects of pollution are serious and potentially fatal. All types of pollution are detrimental to human health and wildlife and contribute to climate change, which puts the entire planet in danger. Knowledge is power, so learning about the effects of pollution is crucial to make changes for the better. Greenhouse gases, like fossil fuels released by vehicles and factories, and methane, released by livestock, contribute to air pollution and add to climate change by raising the earth's temperature. In a vicious circle, climate change then makes a certain type of air pollution worse. Air pollution can have a serious health impact on humans. If you are exposed to a very high levels of air pollutants, you may experience irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, wheezing, coughing and breathing problems and have a greater risk of heart attacks. Air pollution can be also exacerbate existing lung and heart conditions, like asthma. Smoke can irritate the eyes, and throat and also

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[51] Francis, "Encyclical Letter *Laudatio si'*," sec. 20.

damage the lungs. Children, senior citizens and people who work or exercise outside are at a greater risk.

Francis not only examined pollution, he also explored the dangers of waste. Waste, like pollution, hinders progress, and very perilous to human beings, and stimulates poverty. Our earth is covered with garbage, and the filthy is causing premature death and constitutes health risk. Francis confirms,

> Account must also be taken of the pollution produced by residue, including dangerous waste present in different areas. Each year hundreds of millions of tons of waste are generated, much of it non-biodegradable, highly toxic and radioactive, from homes and businesses, from construction and demolition sites, from clinical, electronic and industrial sources. The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth. In many parts of the planet, the elderly lament that once beautiful landscapes are now covered with rubbish. Industrial waste and chemical products utilized in cities and agricultural areas can lead to bioaccumulation in the organisms of the local population, even when levels of toxins in those places are low.[52]

The mismanagement of toxic hazardous waste could lead to conditions that may cause harm to humans or to the environment. It can cause serious or fatal injuries. Also, people who live near a landfill, incinerator, composting center, recycling center, waste management center, town dump, or any other type of toxic waste facility, are prone to health challenges, and untimely death.

In the same vein, Francis like the popes before him lamented the forceful destruction of the earth resources. The felling of trees have adverse effects. It will induce food insecurity, lack of medication, and extinction of some animals and trees which are essential for production and manufacturing. Francis demonstrates,

> The earth's resources are also being plundered because of short-sighted approaches to the economy, commerce and production. The loss of forests and woodlands entails the loss of species which may constitute extremely important resources in the future, not only for food but also for curing disease and other uses. Different species contain genes which

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[52] Francis, "Encyclical Letter *Laudatio si'*," sec. 21.

> could be key resources in years ahead for meeting human needs and regulating environmental problems.[53]

Deforestation is already impacting negatively. It is causing drought, erosion and increasing health problems. Many parts of the world especially developing countries are experiencing less agricultural produce because the soil's fertility is reduced. The decline in crop output is one of the desertification's most significant effects. The land is frequently no longer suited for farming after it transitions from being arable to being dried. As a result of this, some farmers are losing the means of their livelihood thereby increasing unemployment. The loss of agricultural lands pose threat to global food security. There is an increase need for food. There will be more people going hungry and there won't be enough food for everyone if fertile regions that produce that food are lost.

As deforestation is a threat to humanity, so also are the activities on the ocean terrifying humanity. Activities that take place on the ocean are greatly given room for the extinction of fish, and other aquatic creatures. To have portable water is a problem especially for the poor who cannot afford bottled water. Scarcity of fish because of the level of the water is embolden hunger and has increased the price of fish and other sea foods. Francis embellishes,

> Oceans not only contain the bulk of our planet's water supply, but also most of the immense variety of living creatures, many of them still unknown to us and threatened for various reasons. What is more, marine life in rivers, lakes, seas and oceans, which feeds a great part of the world's population, is affected by uncontrolled fishing, leading to a drastic depletion of certain species. … Particularly threatened are marine organisms which we tend to overlook, like some forms of plankton; they represent a significant element in the ocean food chain, and species used for our food ultimately depend on them.[54]

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[53] Francis, "Encyclical Letter *Laudatio si'*," sec. 32.
[54] Francis, "Encyclical Letter *Laudatio si'*," sec. 40.

Climate change is a reality. The effect is been felt in many places especially in Africa. Currently, there is irregular rainfall, and the weather seems very hot. Many animals and fish species are into extinction. Food insecurity is threatening the populace. Some people are displaced because of erosion and flood. Unemployment has increased geometrical. Aquatic life is gradually becoming obsolete because the oceans are drying, and at times they rise very high.

From the above, it is obvious that the Catholic Church has been in the forefront of fighting poverty. They have done this by exploring the root causes, nature, effects, and the solutions to poverty. To fight poverty they started by clamoring justice for all. This is because in the present condition of global society, where injustices abound and growing numbers of people are deprived of basic human rights and considered expendable, the principle of the common good becomes, logical and inevitably, a summons to solidarity and a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters. They maintain that there should be respect for the human person as such, endowed with basic and inalienable rights ordered to his or her integral development. In effect, where there is justice, there will be progress, and poverty will be minimized. Moreover, the popes alerts all that the notion of common good also extends to future generations. This means that the present generation has to be cautious about using the earth's resources, and stop destroying the earth.

I believe this document by Francis is very significant in our contemporary society. Climate change is the problem everybody is worried about. It is discussed everywhere, and has helped some people realize what is climate change. He succinctly explored the causes, effects and possible solutions. Clearly, this encyclical letter manifests what the Church teaches about climate change.

5.4 Church's Teaching on Corruption

The church as an institution has the prophetic mandate to speak out against immoral behavior in the society. Nigeria as a country even though secular in nature has religion as its bedrock that is why it is imperative and essential for the church to lend her voice in the fight against this evil known as corruption because it has engulfed Nigeria and Nigerians, both the leaders and the led, men, women, young and old are guilty of this canker worm. The church has drawn attention to the context and consequences of corruption by observing that in every part of the world stark inequalities between developed and developing countries marked by various forms of exploitation, oppression and corruption have a negative influence on the internal and international life of many states. In this subsection, attention will be on what the church's teaches on corruption, and how to curtail the menace.

According to Olusegun Obasanjo, "The fight against corruption in Nigeria is the fight for the soul and survival of Nigeria. Like cancer, corruption is gradually killing our nation. The time is ripped for individuals and institutions, to be proactive in the fight. The church is an important and influential institution in our society. Our main problems are moral, ethical and attitudinal failure and disorientation."[55] This indicates that the church is an organization that provides the moral and ethical standards for us as believers. When the church looks to its task today in Nigeria, it realizes that it is challenged by the growing numbers who are poor, marginalized, weak, unfortunate, hungry and naked. Those caught in the squeeze of growing population and scare resources. They are the people who are deprived and have no hope of livelihood by the structure and pressures of a society geared to the wealth of the few. Evidently, they are regarded

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[55] Obasanjo, "Role of the Church in the Fight."

as the failures of this age, the misfits of the society, the people displaced by the machine, the aged and the handicapped who cannot work.

The church perceives corruption as the bane of the nation, and that is why people have remained poor in the midst of abundant resources. It is on this note that the church anchored its teaching on corruption on the scripture so that it can perform its prophetic role properly, adequately, and without fear or favor. As it is known, God did not create a corrupt world. The book of Genesis testifies to this reality. (Gen 1: 31), God created a perfect world which man with his wantonness corrupted to the disappointment and dissatisfaction of God. (Gen 6:12) It was God's discontentment with corruption on earth that brought about Noah. (Gen 6:13) In both the Old and New Testaments we have examples and role models to guide the church and God's children on how to repel and combat corruption.

In the Old Testament, the word "bribery" refers to corruption. (Exodus 23:8) It will be an Augean stable to have justice when corruption and bribery are present and involved because the eyes are closed to the truth. Taking a bribe is evidently a violation against God, the weak, the innocent and the community. The command of love and justice in the Torah is first to be applied to the categories of the most vulnerable in the scripture. The list is the widow, orphan, the stranger, the poor, and those who are handicapped. This very list is continually repeated in the prophets (Exodus 22:23-26; Leviticus 19:3; Proverb 17:23).

In order to eschew or fight corruption, the Torah stresses just courts that will assist to checkmate corrupt judges. Just court is considered one of the laws given to Noah that is required of all nations. Deuteronomy provides us with a summary of the laws (Deut 1:16-17). There is also a court of appeal for difficult cases (Deut 1: 10-12; Exodus 23: 6-8). Moreover, just courts

are established so that the outsider will not be oppressed by corrupt persons, and that those who bear false witness will be punished like corrupt judges.

The prophets are noted for their passionate proclamation of God's will against corrupt persons. The prophets condemn those who are unable to maintain social justice for the marginalized and the most vulnerable in the society like the poor, orphans, widows and strangers. The prophets reminded people to be faithful, just, fair and steadfast as indicated in the Torah. If they remain resolute and committed to the Torah, corruption and injustice will be uprooted. Amos as the advocate of the weak and voiceless wants justice for them. (Amos 5:24) The people prophet Amos denounces take their own cut from the hard work of the poor, treat them with disdain, and take bribes. When they sell wheat, they rig the scales and the currency. These ruthless exploiters are nameless, but they plainly have wealth and power. (Amos 5:1-11; 3:9, 4:1; 6:1) For Amos, God demands justice from them rather than worship. (Amos 5:21-24)

Prophets like Micah, Isaiah, Jeremiah and others attacked the same things as Amos. They berated the house of Israel "who eat the flesh of my people and build Zion" (Mic 3:3-10; Isaiah 3:14; 5-8; 29:20-21; Jere 22: 15-16; Ezekiel 18:5-9; Hosea 2:19; 12:5-15) According to the prophets, the powerful treat poor people who are mostly their fellow citizens as sources of wealth and unpaid labor, using coercion, bribery, dishonesty, legal technicalities, and even violence. Essentially, the prophets taught that the test of justice in a nation is how the weakest are treated. They maintain that God expects a system that makes it possible for people to thrive, a system free from corruption that would not deprive them of what they need to survive and flourish. This system is one where merchants are honest and judges are incorruptible, and those treated unjustly have free access to relief in court.

The psalms, like the prophets reinforce the message of social justice and declare that the righteous ruler cares for the marginalized in the society. The Psalms speak of God's justice. The psalmist prays to God to right the wrong, it may be a wrong in the land or a personal wrong. The Psalms decry the oppression of the poor, marginalized and subjugated by the powerful and affluent. (Psalm 9: 2-10; 10: 12-18; 72:10-13; 82: 2-4; 140:1-11; 109: 3-20, Proverbs 18:5; 21:3; 29:26) For the psalmist, the oppression of human beings is a humiliation of God. For justice is not only a relationship between human and human, it is an act involving God, a divine need. To do justice is what God demands of every human being. It is a supreme commandment, an act of love and compassion.

The New Testament, like the Old Testament disparages religious, political leaders, and the wealthy for extorting and exploiting the poor, and the marginalized. Jesus castigated the Scribes because they devoured the houses of widows by cheating them out of their inheritance, they take advantage of the vulnerable, and swindle the poor. (Mark 12:38-43; Matthew 23:15) He called the Sadducees "evil cheats" and those who are wrong on multiple times and issues (Matthew 22:23-34, Mark 12:18; Luke 20:27-40). The kind of corruption the Scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees were involved, very much upset Jesus; it should also incense us in whatever form we find it. (Matthew 23:15; Mark 13:2) Jesus teaches that God does not only deal with corrupt individuals, but promises that justice will one day come to the entire broken system that perpetuates injustice. He also indicated that they will be punished severely for their hypocrisy and corruption. (Mark 12:40; Mark 13:2) Luke articulates some of the harshest warnings about wealth found in the New Testament: the parable of the rich fool (12:13-21), of the unjust steward (16:19-31) and the rich man and Lazarus (16:19-31) There is no glorification or spiritualization

of poverty. The good news to the poor is that wealth does not bring divine blessing, and that the fortunes of rich and poor will be reversed in the life to come.

James exhorts his community to avoid partiality and in biting language mocks the deference shown to the rich and powerful, even though they are oppressing the community (2:1-7). He criticizes them for dishonoring a poor person, even though God chose the poor to become heirs of the kingdom. (2:1-7, 1:22-27, 2:14-17, 5:1-6) The biblical context of statements on the poor most often involves a criticism of the abuses of the wealthy, and those who promote injustice against the poor frequently in vivid terms. It is the prophetic role of the church in Nigeria that follows.

The church in Nigeria (Christianity or Christian religion) following the teaching of the bible on corruption, and realizing that God did not create a corrupt world, and that corruption has become endemic is not to be silent. The church appropriated the prophetic critique of wealth and injustice. This is one of the most demanding ministries of the church leaders today to address people of means, political leaders helping them to recall their roots as a church and guiding them in proper use of resources. Church leaders can raise the consciousness of people about those very kinds of issues that have distinguished church teaching over the last century, and are called to speak out forcefully on issues of injustice as strongly as they have on protection of human life. It is also inevitable that, as the church really adopts the option for the poor and powerless, it will alienate certain powerful groups and carry the cross of rejection.

Clearly, the church plays significance role in the spiritual, socio-economic, political and cultural affairs of the people. The church as the body of Christ (Eph 1:13) has excellent status for caring, promoting, and providing, religious, spiritual, and social services for the people

especially the less privileged. It is because of this that the church speaks out eloquently about the ills of corruption. The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* observes,

> Corruption causes serious harm from a material point of view and places a costly burden on economic growth, still more harmful are its effects on immaterial goods, closely connected to the qualitative and human dimension of life in society. The church's social doctrine should make use of all its fundamental guiding principles, which it puts forth as indications of personal and collective behavior, placing them on the front line in the battle against corruption. These principles are the dignity of the human person, the common good, solidarity, subsidiarity, preferential option for the poor, and the universal destination of goods.[56]

The above means that corruption contradicts these principles. It scorns, and exploits human beings. Moreover, it hinders both economic progress and good behavior.

On this note, the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), that is, the bishops of the various Catholic dioceses of the nation, demonstrated her disgust against corruption. Her plenary assemblies in the months of September 1998 and 1999 had as the theme of discussion Corruption in Nigeria: Implication for Nation Building. They looked analytically into the reality, causes, consequences and the way out of this unwholesome situation that we have found ourselves in as a nation. At the end of their plenary session they issued a communiqué, which reads in part,

> We are painfully aware that corruption has eaten deep into the very fabric of the Nigerian society. It has become so pervasive that many now accept it as the "Nigeria way of doing things. People now speak about a so-called 'Nigerian factor' when they mean corruption has been institutionalized to a point where it almost passes for official policy in both the public and private sectors of our national life. The socio-economic and political system itself appears to be built on corruption and thrives in it. Even the Church and other religious organizations are themselves not completely free from corruption.[57]

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[56] Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 207.
[57] Orji, "Role of Churches in Combatting Corruption," 103.

The inspirational aspect of this is that every communiqué issued by the CBCN after their session is officially sent to the presidency and published in all the Nigerian dailies and weekly magazines for public consumption. The bishops bemoan corruption, the individuals and corporate bodies that propagate it. They, like the prophets, castigate those that promote corruption in the nation. The bishops do not mince words in pointing out corruption as the chief cause of unemployment, poverty, insecurity, armed robbery, human trafficking and economic woes of the nation.

In support of her fight against corruption, the Church through the CBCN came out with a crusade of prayer against bribery and corruption. The title of the prayer is "Prayer against Bribery and Corruption in Nigeria." In part it reads,

> We are deeply sorry for the wrong use of … your gifts and blessings through acts of injustice, bribery and corruption, as a result of which many of our people are hungry, sick, ignorant and defenseless. Father, you alone can heal us and our nation of this sickness. We beg you, touch our lives and the lives of our leaders and people so that we may all realize the evil of bribery and corruption and work hard to eliminate it. Raise up for us God-fearing people and leaders who care for us and who will lead us in the path of peace, prosperity and progress.[58]

The above prayer is recited at the end of every mass or prayer session. This is a valuable crusade and lamentation against corruption. The CBCN, has remained persistent in her call on the government and individuals to make sure that the war against corruption succeeds through carrying out of both public and private businesses in honest and sincere manner.

As a follow-up to the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), the Catholic Laity Council of Nigeria (CLCN), a body comprising Christians who are not ordained, held their 1999 Annual Conference at Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The council, in their contribution to the fight

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[58] Orji, "Role of Churches in Combatting Corruption," 103.

against corruption in Nigeria, had papers presented on the theme "Corruption in Nigeria." Daniel Orji, in his paper titled "Corruption in the Political Life of the Church Members: The Effects on Real Evangelization in Nigeria," condemned in strong terms corruption in all its forms, especially among Christian politicians, "who after looting public treasures would go to Church to donate handsomely and receive rounds of applause."[59] In his dissertation, Orji notes, "In a communiqué issued after the five-day conference, the council confirmed the existence of corruption in Nigeria. She implored the laity to go out into all corners of human life in Nigeria, resisting corruption of every form and also turn others away from the path of corruption."[60]

The resolve of the council is a step forward in the fight against corruption. The council stressed that the church should reject monetary donations from corrupt Christians as this will be a lesson to others. This rejection was implemented by the Catholic Bishop of Uyo Diocese, Nigeria, who rejected a N25 million donation from the governor of Cross River State on August 11, 2022. *Daily Post*, a Nigerian newspaper reports, "The bishop, who was not impressed with the governor for owing salaries of workers, asked the governor to add to the amount and settle [with] workers."[61] This pleased many Nigerians and they urged other clergymen to emulate the bishop.

The Social Development, Justice and Peace Commission of the Catholic Diocese of Nsukka also on April 9, 1999, organized a seminar on corruption in contemporary Nigerian Society. One of the papers presented, titled "War against Corruption," pointed out that "any

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[59] Orji, "Role of Churches in Combatting Corruption," 104.
[60] Orji, "Role of Churches in Combatting Corruption," 104.
[61] Ochogwu Sunday, "Unpaid Salaries: Catholic Priest Hails Bishop for Rejecting Gov. Ayade's N25m Donation," *Daily Post*, August 11, 2022, https://dailypost.ng/2022/08/11/unpaid-salaries-catholic-priest-hails-bishop-for-rejecting-gov-ayades-n25m-donation/.

remedy to corruption has to begin with a determination by every individual to eradicate it first and then in the environment around. … The president, or the state governor or the Local Government Chairman initiating the fight against corruption is remediable because it is part of the evil which Christ came to banish on earth."[62] The objective of this is to let Nigerians realize that corruption is anti-honesty, anti- behavior and anti-progress and as such must be eschewed by all especially Christians.

Another means by which the church fights corruption in our society is through preaching in the church, at crusade grounds and writing. The church must use its power to teach the right values. One of our major problems is the breakdown of our value system. Obasanjo affirms,

> The church, as an agent of socialization, must be in the forefront of rebuilding our value system and making the individual to imbibe these values and moral principles. As part of its evangelical and spiritual mandate, the church must boldly speak out against corruption in our society. The church must take to the high moral ground and speak against corrupt leadership and poor governance. The church must embark on moral re-armament for the church and the nation.[63]

In essence, preachers, men and women of God must be courageous enough to make an objective analysis and criticism of the system. Indeed men and women of God are encouraged to be apostle of social justice like the prophets. They have to do this by their preaching and their way of life. The congregants are motivated to say no to corruption so that there will be economic progress, justice and fairness in the country. The hallmark of this heading, is that it depicts the ministers of the church are like the prophets, they should condemn corruption in its entirety. Bring out the evil associated with corruption. How it assists to promote oppression, marginalization and poverty, and what would be done to reduce it.

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[62] Orji, "Role of Churches in Combatting Corruption," 105.
[63] Obasanjo, "Role of the Church in the Fight."

5.5 The Church's Stand on Prosperity Gospels and Ministries

This unit will explore how posterity gospel has encouraged poverty not only in Nigeria, but in other African countries. The prosperity gospel is a current and destructive theology that is rampant in the Christian church today. The prosperity gospel ultimately is a pseudo gospel and is based on the concepts that God desires all human beings to be physically and materialistically wealth. Prosperity gospel is also known as prosperity theology. It is a world-wide teaching that has caught the consideration of individual Christians, the church, society and even the government. Currently in Nigeria, prosperity theology has not only become the trait of Pentecostal movement, it has influenced some members of the Catholic and Protestant churches. Apyewen Ande, Nuhu Dantani, and Wey Josephine Joseph confirm,

> Prosperity gospel is a current phenomenon that exists among Christian churches in the world. It is a global phenomenon that has drawn the attention of individual Christian, the government and the church and society in general. In Nigeria today, prosperity gospel has not become the characteristic of Pentecostal churches only, it has spread among some Catholic and Protestant Churches. Most of Christian Churches in Nigeria today misuse the original teaching of the gospel given less emphasis on doctrinal issues related to soul-winning, salvation, desire for the kingdom of God and good conducts.[64]

Some of the Christian churches in Nigeria today misapply the authentic teachings of the scripture by emphasizing materialism, healing, and well-being without accentuating the cross of Jesus Christ, and doctrinal issues related to soul winning, salvation, and the desire for the kingdom of God. It teaches the unbiblical promises of physical health and material wealth and ignores the sinful depravity of mankind and the paramount need for redemption.

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[64] Ande Utensati Apyewen, Dantani Nuhu, and Josephine Joseph Weyi, "Prosperity Gospel: Effects on Nigerian Christian Church and Society," *International Journal of Social Science and Human Research* 5, no. 4 (April 2022): 1500, https://doi.org/10.47191/ijsshr/v5-i4-40.

The prosperity gospel or theology has many nuances and is known by many names like health and wealth gospel, the word of faith movement, and prosperity theology. To capture the exact meaning of prosperity gospel is not easy because it is an umbrella term for a group of ideas popular among charismatic preachers in the evangelical tradition that equate Christian faith with material, and particularly, financial success. *Merrian-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* defines *prosperity* as "the condition of being successful or thriving; *esp*: economic well-being."[65] Prosperity theology teaches that God wants his people to be prosperous and healthy in life, with wealth being used as the measure for one's level of favor with God. Accordingly, Ayantayo explains the prosperity gospel as

> a strong teaching that requires Christians to be prosperous while on earth. The emphasis is strongly placed on material acquisition, which could be manifested in possession of cars, houses, fat bank accounts, cash at hand, clothing, abundance, fortune and success in all endeavors, all of which make prosperity therefore a divine favor which Christians must seek and possibly pursue with vigor.[66]

On the same token, Apyewen, Nuhu, and Weyi describe prosperity theology as "the gospel of good health, gospel of wealth, and gospel of success in all walks of life. It is a religious belief among some Christians' churches that financial blessing and physical well-being are always the will of God for them, and that faith, positive speech, and donations to religious activities will increase one's material wealth."[67] This portrays that prosperity gospel views the Bible as a contract between God and humans; if humans have faith in God, He will provide them security and prosperity in life. The teaching heightens the essence of personal empowerment. It

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[65] *Merrian-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. (2008), s.v. "prosperity."

[66] J. K. Ayantayo, "Prosperity Gospel and Social Morality: A Critique," in *Creativity and Change in Nigerian Christianity*, edited by David Ogungbile and Akintunde Akinade (Lagos, Nigeria: Malthouse Press, 2010), 202.

[67] Apyewen, Nuhu, Weyi, "Prosperity Gospel: Effects" 1500.

advocates that God's will for his people is fortune. To be favored by God is construed as alleviation from poverty and sickness, and this can be accomplished by donations of money especially to the man of God, or the pastor. It is also achieved by visualization, and positive confession.

In Nigeria, there are many prosperity preachers but the individual who first became most identified with this movement was late Benson Idahosa. Apyewen, Nuhu, and Weyi note that Idahosa "earned his place in history, however, not just because he was the first African to articulate the message, but because of how he took his theology to the masses. Idahosa, against the trend in the society of his time, was preaching that Christians ought to have access to material wealth and live life to the full."[68] Today in Africa especially in Nigeria, many other pastors have taken after Idahosa. Pastors like; David Oyedepo of the living Faith Church (aka Winners Chapel), E. A. Adeboye of Redeem Christian Church of God, W. F. Kumuyi of Deeper Life Christian Bible Church, Chris Oyakhilome of Christ Embassy Church, and Johnson Suleiman of Omega fire Ministry and a host of others.

The teachings or doctrines of prosperity theology are from the Bible. They quote the scriptures correctly and abundantly but misuse it to fit their selfish interest and feed their ego. For the prosperity pastors, faith in God gives one good health, affluence and security. However, you can only acquire God's healing power if you work on your faith and follow the spiritual law. Apyewen, Nuhu, and Weyi demonstrate,

> The prosperity theology teaches that Christ's atoning death does not release believers from spiritual sin only. It frees them from physical disease as well (Isaiah 53:5). You maintain this freedom through effective and marathon prayer, regular fasting and positive thinking which means one believes that the healing has taken place. If someone is prayed

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[68] Apyewen, Nuhu, and Weyi, "Prosperity Gospel: Effects," 1501.

> for but does not get healed, then it is their fault because they lack faith or they have sin or sins they have committed but not confessed.[69]

The prosperity preachers use different methods to inculcate or brainwash their members with prosperity mentality. They organize crusade, boast of having power, good networking, mentorship and intimacy, and use effective media and publication of sermons. This is overwhelming, and leaves a lot of questions begging for answers. For instance, why do we still have sick people in these churches? They have confessed multiple times but are still sick. What of children who have no idea of sin but are mortally sick? If this claim is true, going to the hospital will be remote, and medication will be unnecessary. Is this playing God or deception?

Prosperity gospel stresses on the need to clear generational sins committed by one's parents or grandparents, and all kinds of social, economic and political misfortunes. For this reason, there is a need for deliverance. Apyewen, Nuhu, and Weyi articulate,

> According to the prosperity gospel or theology, a person needs deliverance not just from the generational sins of parents or grandparents, but also from the evil spirits. The use of the 'blessed' and 'anointed' objects for healing is common. These include but are not limited to oil, water, handkerchiefs, and food products. More often than not, these objects are sold at high prices to those seeking healing and deliverance.[70]

It is hard to believe how generational sin can obstruct a person from progress. It more ridiculous, how anointed items like; oil and water will eliminate generational sins. Is this not mere market strategy? When people especially Nigerians misuse opportunities, or are not ready to be painstaking with what they do, they term it generational sin. Often times, when the adherents of prosperity theology buy and apply the anointed objects nothing significant happens. Instead of working hard, they purport that the sins of their parents and grandparents are responsible for their

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[69] Apyewen, Nuhu, and Weyi, "Prosperity Gospel: Effects," 1501.
[70] Apyewen, Nuhu, and Weyi, "Prosperity Gospel: Effects," 1501.

economic, political and social problems. This teaching is exploitative, manipulative and fundamentally scandalous. The core message of the Gospel is Christ crucified and him crucified. The apostles never preached prosperity. Hence the need for personal introspection becomes pertinent.

Prosperity gospel preaches that wealth is a sign of blessing from God the provider. The prosperity theology claims that the invisible faith leads to tangible financial rewards. It emphasizes that the size of one's wallet tells the size of the person's faith. The more one donates for religious causes the more God will increase one's material wealth. Ogunlusi Clement Temitope demonstrates,

> Prosperity theology teaches that God wants his people to be prosperous and healthy in life, with wealth being used as a measure for one's level of favor with God. Prosperity theology also referred to as the prosperity gospel, the health and wealth gospel, or gospel of success, is a religious trend among some Christian sects, who hold that financial blessings and physical well-being are always the will of God for them, and that faith, positive speech, and donations to religious causes will increase one's material wealth.[71]

The presumption of the prosperity theology is that Christians are to be prosperous while on earth. That is why emphasis is placed on material acquisition. Some of these scripture passages are used to buttress the principle of seed faith. 3 John 2, Deuteronomy 8:18, 2 Corinthians 8:9. The principle of seed faith means that God does not want Christians only to have wealth; he expects them to play the role of contributing in cash and in kind to his work, if they must enjoy that wealth. The giving is in anticipation of what God will do, otherwise known as 'sowing seed' (Genesis 8:22) Prosperity pastors manifest that everything God did started with seed planting, it is only when one gives to God that he multiplies and that is why intractable

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[71] Ogunlusi C. Temitope, "Prosperity Gospel Preaching and Its Implications on National Developments," *International Journal of Humanities and Cultural Studies* 5, no. 1 (June 2018): 313-328.

challenges can be solved through seed-giving, tithes, and any other types of offerings. Ayantayo embellishes,

> The pastors often ask the congregation to sow fat so that they may reap bounteously. In the light of this, they design some offerings such as offering that opens heaven for blessings, offerings that remove poverty from one's life completely, offering that brings abundant and unlimited success in all earthly endeavors. To accompany these, the prosperity pastors sell anointed objects … to the willing members of the audience claiming that their use will open the way to all round and everlasting success.[72]

Often times, prosperity preachers use media, like televangelism and other publications to reach wide audience. They indeed close their services with the repetition of the words of Psalm 23: "Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life."

On the same token, prosperity theology affirms that confessing with the mouth and believing with the heart grants prosperity and success to individuals. Temitope demonstrates,

> "Meanwhile, some proponents of the movement maintained that believers who had enough faith, kept a positive confession and gave a minimum of 10% of their income to their churches would walk in divine wealth. They encourage their followers to pray, and even demand, of God "everything from modes of transportation (cars, vans, trucks, even two-seated planes) to homes, furniture, and large bank accounts.[73]

The prosperity preachers claim they have the power to make a person rich; because of this, they introduce a series of techniques which are manifested in the manipulation and playing upon the intelligence or ignorance of their congregants. The law of positive confession of the prosperity gospel places the will of man above the will of God. Believers are encouraged to demand whatever they want from God, and God is obligated to deliver, if these requests are made in faith. This completely ignores the fact that the will of God is superior to the will of man,

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[72] Ayantayo, "Prosperity Gospel and Social Morality," 203.
[73] Temitope, "Prosperity Gospel Theology" 313-328.

and that the will of God will always prevail no matter the volume and the length of positive confessions. Complementing, Ayantayo writes,

> They organize crusade time to time with tags and labels associated with prosperity. There are many lists of crusade title in Nigeria that are used by prosperity preachers. One can see this in both rural and urban cities in Nigeria today like 2021 year of glory to glory, 2022 year of breakthrough, hour of unlimited blessing, freedom from financial bondage, deliverance from generational curses, poverty to prosperity, and many more. These crusade titles are not just tags. They are backed with biblical quotation illustrating the need and desire for prosperous life.[74]

At the crusade ground, the prosperity preachers usually ask the congregants to project and claim they are rich because Christ suffered for them to be rich. In order to accomplish this richness, they are requested to donate money, and other things like cars and houses to be beneficiary and attract or provoke God's blessings.

In addition to seeding sowing and confessing ones sins, prosperity gospel preaches about hundredfold return and testimonies. They appreciate to share innumerable stories of those who believe in what they preach and the results that they got from such doctrine. The testimonies are powered by incessant prayers and prophetic declarations. This 'hundredfold bandwagon' as some call it, is based on the promise of Jesus to provide a hundredfold return to those who leave everything behind for the kingdom. (Mark 10: 29-30) According to Gloria Copeland, "give $1 for the sake of the gospel and receive $100; give $10, and receive $1,000, and if you give $1,000, you get $100,000. I know you can multiply, but I want you to see in black and white how tremendous the hundredfold return is."[75] The danger of this theology is that it distorts God's character and significantly reduces His divine position. God is viewed as a blessing dispenser

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[74] Ayantayo, "Prosperity Gospel and Social Morality," 203.

[75] David J. Downs, "Giving for a Return in the Prosperity Gospel and the New Testament" (paper presentation, Global Consultation on Prosperity Theology, Poverty, and the Gospel, São Paulo, Brazil, March 30–April 2, 2014), https://lausanne.org/content/giving-for-a-return-in-the-prosperity-gospel-and-the-new-testament-2.

rather than our sovereign Creator and savior. He becomes obligated and duty-bound to bless mankind with health and material wealth rather than rule with authority and grace. The prosperity preachers ignore to mention persecutions, and the cross. They use their agents to raise funds, who claim they are sent by God to make people rich, successful and prosperous. The description of prosperity theology, doctrines, and operation will be followed by the church's stand on their teachings and practices.

The church in Africa, especially in Nigeria, is not absolutely averse to prosperity gospel; rather it is against some of its doctrines and practices which are incongruous with the teachings of Jesus Christ. Prosperity preachers, portend to have the advantage of great packaging but problematic content, exciting entertainment but lack of spiritual enrichment, great emphasizes on what the peoples' want without properly discerning what they really need. A lot of criticism lies on their doorstep because of this. This implies that prosperity theology has wreaked havoc on Christian faith because of decades of unchecked wave of prosperity preaching.

The church in Nigeria, strongly opposes the monetization and commercialization of religious activities. Prosperity preachers sale both religious and non-religious articles such as handkerchiefs, incense, oil and water so that they will make money for themselves, whereas their followers remain poor. It is indubitable that religious activities such as clapping of hands, dancing, prayer, devotion and the likes have been monetized. Sunday Mbang weeps,

> The commercialization of Christianity has led to corruption and other forms of indiscipline in our churches today. The church, which was supposed to be a house of God, has become a den of robbers, a place for mischief makers, cheats, and immoral acts. In Nigeria today, both Orthodox churches and Pentecostal churches place much emphasis

> on money than soul winning, salvation of man, hard work and good conduct in the society.[76]

This bizarre situation has made it possible to appoint people into position in the church based on their financial worth and their financial contribution to the church. Religion has been misused as money ventures in a large scale. This situation creates a big chasm between the rich and the poor. It increases corruption which is noted above as a primary cause of poverty. It contradicts Christ's teaching on heavenly treasures stands in stark contrast to all of this: "Do not store up for yourselves treasuries on earth where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal" (Matthew 6: 19-20).

Prosperity gospel undermines attempt at reducing poverty. Announcing and shouting by the prosperity Preachers that their adherents should claim they are rich can never be a panacea to poverty. The reality is that claim and believe it, are not the same as having or possessing it. Having it is very remote, because you cannot have it without working. Claiming it is deceptive, and auto suggestion which gives psychological relief but not in any way concrete. Many people especially Nigerians who have gone to prosperity churches in search of wealth return home poorer because they have been shortchanged. In return, they receive unrealistic prophetic words which often never come to pass. The result is that these people end up being angry at God. Some of them have abandoned their faith altogether. This is not healthy for the Christian church. Simply believing harder will not solve the problem of poverty, but rather, elimination of social evil and economic empowerment of the poor alongside encouraging their faith is the solution. If

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[76] Sunday Mbang, *Daily Star*, February 20, 1985, quoted in Apyewen, Nuhu, and Weyi, "Prosperity Gospel: Effects," 1503.

prosperity preachers want to assist in alleviating poverty in Nigeria, they should establish industries, employ people and pay them adequately. Providing amenities is another way they can help to ameliorate poverty in Nigeria, unfortunately, their mantra; claim and believe it, and slogan financial breakthrough and opening of closed doors are not relieving the economic hardship of the people because there are empty promises without actions.

Basically, prosperity gospel in Nigeria does not manifest any relationship between hard work and wealth. It stresses that poverty is as a result of not having faith in God. This belief has exacerbated poverty in Nigeria because followers of prosperity gospel do not perceive hard work as rewarding, rather they rely mostly on the faith they have in God as solution to their material well-being. Temitope notes,

> "Recent trend of things in Nigeria show that there seems to be a gradual pattern swing or paradigm shift in the orientation and inclination of people from hard labor to idleness and from holiness to worldiness just because people are now being taught to expect much fruit from little labor or no labor at all in the name of miracle. This is happening to verse majority of the Nigerian population, especially the many jobless graduates and other able-bodied youths who should otherwise be self-employed or gainfully employed in industries or production sector of the economy but lurking around churches looking for or expecting miracles. It is disheartening to know that it is the pulpit that such negative, deceitful and fruitless encouragement are being proclaimed and propagated. One would expect otherwise,"[77]

This singular attitude is one of the reasons why the prosperity congregants remain in the church from morning till night hoping for financial miracle, food, and other essential things necessary for life. This creation of a pseudo idol has increased hunger, hardship, dependence on others, lack of skill and initiative for work and abject poverty. Moreover, this type of practice

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[77] Temitope, "Prosperity Gospel Preaching" 313-328.

detracts from the glories of heaven. Dependence on God is a primary value, but waiting in the church for material well- being, financial breakthrough and wealth is not motivational.

While it is not a good idea to discard the entire content of prosperity theology; the church teaches that prosperity preachers should be aware of the impact of their concept preaching, and interpretation of the scripture on Nigerians, and especially on their followers. It is recommended that they use the right hermeneutical tools to study the Bible, bring out their sermons and preach sincerely the gospel of salvation, and eschew the monetization and commercialization of religious activities. Supporting this, Apyewen, Nuhu, and Weyi underscore,

> In order to reverse this ugly trend posted by prosperity gospel among Nigerian Christian church and society, the need to raise the level of biblical literacy of Nigerian Christians is quite apparent and urgent. This is achievable when untrained and half-trained preachers submit themselves to adequate training by credible theological seminaries and strong departments of Religious Studies in Nigeria universities in the area of Christian theology, biblical hermeneutics, biblical ethics, and effective homiletical principles. It will help to reduce misinterpretation of bible or biblical literacy by some prosperity preachers.[78]

This is essential because it will save some of the preachers from the shameful and disgraceful experience. It will assist them to return to the standard gospel that focuses on salvation than prosperity preaching to eradicate the commercialization of the church. This will enable them to stop such teachings that God only reacts in favor of human beings when He is giving surprising huge amount of money. Indicating that one's physical well-being determines how benevolent God is which is highly subjectively, arbitrary, egregious and against the teaching of Christ.

Furthermore, the church encourages proper social and religious regulation, and enacts guidelines. This helps to check the activities of church preachers especially those who take from the sweat of the helpless people and give nothing back to the society but only to service their

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[78] Apyewen, Nuhu, and Weyi, "Prosperity Gospel: Effects," 1504.

own selfish interests. Preachers, especially prosperity preachers should emphasize and preach the benefits of hard work, encourage production of goods and services, stimulate in their members analytic thinking, visibility plans and the process involve in the production of goods and services. Apyewen, Nuhu, and Wey argue, "The church and its message should not just focus on tithing and sowing of seeds breakthrough, miracles and wonders. Religious leaders can encourage and promote good communities' initiative such as cooperative societies, creativity and innovations instead of waiting for government to do what they can do for themselves."[79] When this is encouraged, it will help to create employment, sincere wealth, minimize poverty and hunger. The society will prosper, some social ills will be ameliorated, and criminal activities will be reduced.

The author believes that posterity gospel is flawed. It is defective because it has faulty idea of the relationship between God and man. Analytically, if prosperity teaching is right, grace becomes obsolete. God becomes insignificant and man becomes the measure of all things. Prosperity teachers have seriously turned the relationship between God and man into financial relationship. For instance, for the fact that the members have come to the church and have shouted claimed it. They should be automatically reward financially by God. They have reduced God to a kind of cosmic bellhop attending to the needs and desires of creation. This is wholly inadequate and unbiblical view of the relationship between God and man.

Prosperity teaching is a corruption of the bible. Theologically, prosperity gospel is strongly based on the Abrahamic covenant. This is correct, but prosperity teachers do not maintain an orthodox view of this covenant. They hold the erroneous view concerning the

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[79] Apyewen, Nuhu, and Weyi, "Prosperity Gospel: Effects," 1504.

application of the covenant. They claim that the primary purpose for Abrahamic covenant was to bless Abraham materially, because believers are Abraham's spiritual children they inherited these financial blessings of the covenant. They maintain that since God's covenant has been established and prosperity is a provision of this covenant, you need to realize that prosperity belong to you here and now. This is a distorted theology that rules out hard work.

In addition, I think prosperity teachers have a wrong perception of the life of Jesus Christ. They teach that Jesus had a nice house, a big house, he handled big money, and wore designer dresses, shoes and watches. It is easy to see how such jaundiced teaching of the life of Jesus Christ could lead to an equally misconception of the death of Jesus. Again prosperity theology misinterpret 2 Corinthians 8:9. They interpret it in a very shallow manner. They indicate that Paul was teaching about an increase in material wealth, but exegetically, Paul was teaching the opposite. Paul admonished the Corinthians that since Christ accomplished so much for them through the Atonement, how much more ought they to empty themselves of their riches in service of the savior? In effect Paul encouraged the Corinthians to give their wealth away to their needy brothers and sisters.

5.6 Accentuate Right and Moral Values

This subtitle will state how the church corrects prosperity gospel by encouraging the teaching right and moral values. The church in her teaching of right and moral values notes that glorifying riches should be discouraged. Messages of instant success and wealth are unacceptable because there are deceptive. This gospel of instant gratification has met with

generation of Nigerians who are just in for immediate success, relief, and effortless profit. It is an indolent generation who want to be abundantly affluent without working for it, which depends only on the pastor's prayer for the attainment of glory. The church reiterates that wealth and development don't come by miracle or magic in life. It is essential to note that Prayer without work is useless and one should know that you do not need pastor's blessings to create wealth in life. Nigerians and others should realize that spurious religious hope like receive it, and claim it in Jesus' name are not sufficient to put food on the table, nor build houses, pay bills or fulfill one's wishes. The concern should be on the salvation of souls, desire for the kingdom of God, hard work, care for the poor and needy, empowerment, ethical and good moral conduct.

The church condemns diametrically ill-gotten wealth. The quest to become rich quickly has heightened the desire for materialism in Nigeria today. In lieu of that, there are high crimes in the church and society because of prosperity gospel. Some Christians engage in crimes such as drug, child trafficking, kidnapping, money laundry, cheating, and extortion among others all in the effort to become rich since they have been taught that prosperity is the basis for their being recognized in the society and church. Ikekwune confirms,

> Nigeria is a capitalist country where one is assessed by the type of car one drives, the number of houses one owns and even the number of wives one has. This societal set has created a mad urge in the individual to acquire material wealth by hook or by crook. Some do not care any more about their families and the upbringing of their children. All they want is wealth at all cost. Prosperity preachers do not care about the source of wealth of their members. They are fond of pouring blessings on those that are rich in the society or in the church or those that contribute high amounts of money to church projects.[80]

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[80] S. Ikekwun, "The Police, Crime and the Nation," *Orita: Ibadan Journal of Religious Studies* 26, no. 1-2 (1994): 95, quoted in Apyewen, Nuhu, and Weyi, "Prosperity Gospel: Effects," 1503.

The church challenges and bemoans this criminal act in our society. It also deplores the attitude of some religious leaders who associate and promote criminals to accomplish their nefarious activities. The church teaches that people of questionable character and their wealth should be discarded and rejected because it discourages sincere Christians, promotes crime and immoral behavior which impedes the progress of the nation.

The church does not only bewail ill-gotten wealth, it also frowns at the life style of some preachers and pastors who display and showcase their clothes, shoes, wristwatches, cars, jets and the mansions they have built or acquired by the money meant for church project. Temitope opines,

> In a fractured Nigeria, where ethinic group is pitted against ethinic group, race against race, corruption abounds almost everywhere, people against government against private enterprise, women against men, the church is looked up to in re-orientating minds positively in collaboration with government for a revamp and not to take advantage of the situation. No other ministry of the church is greater than this. But the reverse is the case as prosperity teachers are taking advantage of the situation to amass wealth. They are preying on the gullibility of the ignorant congregation to skin and scrape them to the bone. They milked their poor (as well as the rich) congregation to the point of nakedness only to enrich themselves and earn fame as the richest preacher. On record, it is common to see the names of our prolific preachers competing for who is the richest and not who is the holiest or who has impacted most on the nation.[81]

The flamboyant and ostentatious life style of these pastors leave a lot to be desired, and does not show any prudence in financial management. It only encourages dishonesty and corruption which is what the church is absolutely against. The church emphasizes accountability and transparency especially in financial matters as this will assist to eliminate corruption, hunger and economic hardship.

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[81] Temitope, "Prosperity Gospel Preaching" 313-328.

Additionally, some of these pastors in Nigeria own businesses, and schools they established with money donated by the members. Ironically, the schools are exorbitant that only exceptionally few can attend. Most church members and their children are excluded from the schools because they cannot afford it. According to Apyewen, Nuhu, and Weyi,

> One of the most worrisome issues is that most prosperity gospel preachers own small, medium and big businesses and do so with money donated by members including the most vulnerable. The children of the most vulnerable in the society cannot attend some of the schools set up by prosperity preachers or churches despite the fact that they donate money to prosperity preachers or churches.[82]

The church disparages this type of life style. Because it does not help to minimize poverty; neither does it assist in economic growth. Clearly, the church maintains that church leaders and members should live by example. It must be the case of do as I do, not do as I say. The church is expected to live by the highest standard as prescribed in the word of God. The church is the light of the world. In conduct, behaviors, activities and programs this light must show forth in its full brightness for all and sundry to see and emulate. In actions and deeds, the church must stand up against gaudy life. This will serve to stimulate and evoke contentment, honesty, truth, justice, and care for the poor in the Nigerian society.

The Church in emphasizing good moral as a means of improving the country stresses the essence of willful or conscious resistance. This is because willful or conscious resistance supports preferential option for the poor, and stands in solidarity with the poor who are the most vulnerable in the society. Emphaiszing willful or conscious resistance encourages every individual especially functional politicians, business enterprenuers, teachers, students and public servants in Nigeria to resist greed, embezzlement, fraud, ethical crisis, prebendalsim, human

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[82] Apyewen, Nuhu, and Weyi, "Prosperity Gospel: Effects," 1504.

trafficking, cultism and other factors that exacerbate poverty and hinder progress. As noted above, willful or conscious resistance anchored on the golden rule and compassion assists Nigerians to realize that treating others as you would like them to treat you is a universal principle, and not the church's precept. It stimulates the practice of justice and fairness. Conscious and willful resistance informs Nigerians especially the leaders that we are interconnected, and that it is better to do good and avoid evil. As the core of willful or conscious resistance is compassion, it motivates the leaders to suffer with the masses of Nigerians who are destitute, hungry, sick and oppressed. The objective of conscious or willful resistance is love. This love is what prompted the Good Samaritan to care for the man who fell victim to robbers. Willful resistance urges everybody to be the Good Samaritan, and care for the most vulnerable in the society. Willful or conscious resistance ushers in positive change and empower Nigerians to resist systemic structures of corruption and bad governance, nepotism, tribalism and poor leadership. Its goal is to enhance accountability, responsibility, transparency, good governance, and ethical leadership.

While the role of the church is emphasized in assisting to make Nigeria habitable, comfortable and progressive, it must be realized that this great institution is nothing but a microcosm of the entire nation. In this passage, the research has shown that the church needs to emphasize morality and good values. But the church cannot do it all alone there is need for every well-meaning Nigeria to be involved in this clarion call to shun crime, corruption, and specious life so that poverty, marginalization and unemployment will be alleviated.

5.7 Church in Nigeria and Participation in Politics

This sector, will evaluate the necessity of the church to participate in politics. There is

plausible need for the church in Nigeria to participate actively in politics. Even though some people posit that politics is a dirty game therefore the church should have nothing to do with it. On the contrary, the church in Nigeria should not stand aloof from politics but rather should perceive politics as a divine responsibility. (Matthew 5:14-16) this means that the church should exert influence in Nigeria by preserving the salt from decay and beaming its light where there is crime, corruption, poverty, fraud, injustice and poor leadership. It should engage political authorities on socio-economic and political issues that affect humanity. For the church to be indifferent to politics in Nigeria, means it has deficient idea about her Christian vocation. Kunhiyop remarked,

> In the New Testament, even though frequently challenged, Jesus Christ himself was seen trying to integrate religion and society. His statement and actions did not suggest a dichotomy between the two. Involvement in society was central and mandatory for the early Christians. Jesus Christ the founder of the Christian religion, commands his followers to be salt and light of the world.[83]

There is no doubt that Christians have faced a lot of challenges in politics that will not deter them from participating in politics. If Jesus Christ and the prophets rebuked and advised the kings of their time, Christians should expeditiously follow their footsteps.

The word *politics* has been described in several ways. Etymologically, the word *politics* comes from the Greek word *politikos*, meaning "of citizens, pertaining to the state and its administration; pertaining to public life."[84] It came to mean the "science and art of government."[85] *Merrian-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* begins with a similar definition and adds "the art or science concerned with guiding or influencing governmental policy . . . [or] with

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[83] Samuel W. Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics* (Nairobi: Word Alive Publishers, 2008), 100.

[84] Online Etymology Dictionary, s.v. "politics (n.)," last updated October 13, 2021, https://www.etymonline.com/word/politics.

[85] Online Etymology Dictionary, s.v. "politics (n.)."

winning and holding control over a government."[86] These explanations of politics suggest basically that politics is the art of governance. It is the instrument through which human and material resources are harnessed, distributed or allocated. It is through politics that a group of people choose and decide who will be their leaders.

The important nature of politics makes it imperative that it should not be left to politicians alone. Politics grants power and authority to an individual or group of individuals. It is because of this that human beings look for it at all cost, and when they get it, corruption, and other forms of crimes ensue. The superfluous nature of functional Nigerian politicians and the evil they perpetuate in the nation makes it crucial and essential that the church should participate in politics. Otuonayo Othuke narrates,

> Nigeria, as seen by many of its citizens as a country that has failed politically, … since independence, Nigeria has continued to meander the path befitting failed, weak and "juvenile" … Nigeria is still stuck in the league of very poor, corrupt, under-developed, infrastructural- decay, crisis-driven, morally bankrupt and leadership-deficient countries of the world. Rather than become an exemplar for transformational leadership, modern bureaucracy, national development, national integration and innovation, Nigeria seems to be infamous for whatever is mediocre, corrupt, insanely violent and morally untoward. Thus, one cannot but agree with the position that Nigeria is a victim of poor leadership and convoluted systemic corruption which has become pervasive and cancerous in the country's life.[87]

Apparently, one of the reasons why Nigeria finds it difficult to address her perennial leadership problem is because when people identify with certain political parties and perhaps run for political office, they become partisan, clannish, selfish, corrupt and unjust.

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[86] *Merrian-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. (2008), s.v. "politics."

[87] Otuonuyo Othuke, "Christian Politics: The Desired Need for the Political Spectrum of Nigeria," Academia.edu, accessed February 27, 2024,1-79, https://www.academia.edu/37218592/CHRISTIAN_POLITICS_THE_DESIRED_NEED_FOR_THE_POLITICAL_SPECTRUM_OF_NIGERIA.

This reality gives credence to the fact that the church needs to encourage her members to become politically active so that they could have the opportunity to represent God in the society through good governance. Gado Cletus Philemon postulates,

> God is concerned about all of life and not just the spiritual well-being of His creation. Because Jesus is Lord of all (1Cor: 8-6; Col 3:11; Psalm 24), he has interest in every system and institution that promotes his character and attributes. As a result, Jesus desires his children to penetrate all of life (science and technology, economics, business, law, education, politics etc) to ensure that the right things are done and preserved.[88]

Obviously, the church in Nigeria has the responsibility of saying no to bad government, policies and corruption. The church has to be the voice of the voiceless, marginalized, poor and oppressed. The Church has to let the government realize the quantum of hunger in the nation caused by poor political leadership and bad economic principles.

Participating in politics by the church is of two types; participation by the church leaders or pastors and the participation by members. Leaders of churches and pastors are not to be partisan, professional or functional politicians. They are not to be members of any political party. Rather their role in politics is prophetic they are to speak out against any form of injustice, subjugation and corruption. In both the Old and New Testaments, God's representatives spoke out against abuse of political power and sought the just use of power. Participation in politics does not detract from spirituality. Othuke mentions,

> The key role of church leaders in politics is through its prophetic ministry. "Prophetic" here means speaking into policy, structure, or issues in the name of Christ, or on behalf of humanity in general or of a community in particular. … The church has a set of moral norms and it has illustrations in scripture and in history of how these norms have been used. The prophetic role is seen in the application of relevant moral norms to the current political concerns of the day.[89]

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[88] Philemon Cletus Gado, "The Church and Political Involvement in Nigeria," Academia.edu, accessed February 27, 2024, 1-13, https://www.academia.edu/33050394/THE_CHURCH_AND_POLITICAL_INVOLVEMENT_IN_NIGERIA.

[89] Othuke, "Christian Politics," 1-79.

It becomes vital that church leaders should constantly engage with government on justice, corruption, leadership, poverty, economy, housing, education, health care, morals, security, unemployment, and infrastructural development.

Furthermore, Church leaders are to commend the government when they perform justly and properly, and condemn them when they perform despicably and insouciantly. Othuke maintains,

> Church leaders need to be saying "yes" as well as "no" to governmental promises and policies. By "no" we mean to clearly oppose wrongdoing, corruption, or anything else deemed unedifying and not benefitting society. "Yes" supports commitments to fulfilling promises made to making real efforts to curb crime, to making education truly a prime target for development, to making health care accessible and significant-not second rate. Government (including local government) should look again at how it spends money in areas considered priorities.[90]

By saying yes, it means the church is to encourage government, this is especially important when the policies formulated by the government are right. Church leaders are to educate their members and other people when the government is promoting human rights and dignity. By saying no, it indicates that church leaders are expected to speak out when government introduces policies that weaken the economy. Also, church leaders are not to keep silent when government does not preserve human dignity.

Another way by which church leaders participate in politics is by educating their congregations on civil matters (Matthew 22:21). There are some church members who do not know their civic rights and do not take it seriously such people need to be informed about their responsibilities for the good of the society. Gado supports,

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[90] Othuke, "Christian Politics," 1-79.

> The church has a role to play in ensuring that Christians and the society generally live up to their civic obligations. It should encourage and insist that people have their voter cards and are ready for elections so that they are not disenfranchised. It is important to get members ready to elect the right people into political offices.[91]

When the right people are elected into office, poverty, corruption, and other crimes will be minimized. In effect, Church leaders are to let people know that to a reasonable degree that they are responsible that a state fulfills its rightful task, and that right people are put into office irrespective of their ethnic, religious or any other affiliation. Those elected into offices are to be constantly reminded of their duties, by this oppression, embezzlement, fraud, greed are challenged with the ballot and not with bullets.

Reasonably, the role of church leaders in politics is ethical, and not of party politics. That is why the prophetic voice of some church leaders In Nigeria, is not lacking. Church leaders like Cardinals John Onayikan, and Anthony Okogie, Archbishops Anthony J V. Obinna, Ignatius Kigama, and Bishops Matthew Hassan Kukah, Sunday Mbang and organizations like the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria, (CBCN), Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and others; are always reminding political office holders, and functional politicians of their duty to the nation and the essence of good governance. Why politicians and political office holders in Nigeria are insensitive and indifferent to the clarion call of the church leaders about the essence of good governance is perplexing and worrisome.

Even though, church leaders are not to participate in partisan politics, church members are encouraged to be involved in active politics. They are to be members of political parties, seek political office, above all, they are to get their voter cards, and go out to vote. They are to

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[91] Gado, "The Church and Political Involvement," 1-13.

engage in active politics because the church is called to be salt and light of the world (Matthew 5:14-16) This clarion call by Jesus was intended to release Christians into all the nooks and crannies of the earth in order to perpetuate it with goodness, good governance, goodness, love, compassion and justice. Minnery comments,

> Salt prevents decay when it is rubbed into meat. But its preservative traits works only when it penetrates the food, and it becomes useless if adulterated by other chemical substances. It must remain pure if it to accomplish its task. Jesus illustration is profound because it demonstrates that Christians are to penetrate society while keeping themselves from being penetrated.[92]

This underscores the need for Christians to be involved in politics to prevent Nigeria that is suffering from social, economic, educational, moral and political decadence. Christians are to be exemplary in politics, they are to be cautious and eschew being contaminated by corrupt politicians. Above all, they are to heed and implement the prophetic voice of religious leaders by making sure there is good governance, and economic progress. This will ensure employment, justice, human dignity, security, order, and protection of the poor, weak and oppressed in the society.

Both religious leaders and the members are to be engaged in politics but in different capacities, church leaders by their prophetic role, and church members by active participation. Apparently, church members who engage in politics have to be circumspect so that they don't become victims of corruption, deception, exploitation and bad governance.

The writer is critical about Christians and Moslem participating in politics. This is because since the independence of the nation in 1960, till the present many Christians and

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[92] Tom Minnery, *Why You Can't Stay Silent: A Biblical Mandate to Shape Our Culture* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 2001), 63.

Moslems have been involved in partisan politics; why they have not made any meaningful impact in curbing corruption, and alleviating poverty in Nigeria is agonizing and demoralizing. All the military heads of state, all the civilian heads of state, governors, and members of the various houses, local government chairmen and councilors have either being Christian or Moslem. Why they have not improved the system to enable the nation have transparent, good governance and corrupt free system remains enigmatic.

This segment narrated that no matter how filthy and precarious Nigeria politics may be, it is essential that the church participates, to curb the excesses of functional politicians and their cronies that escalate corruption and poverty. Church leaders by their prophetic role, and the people by involving actively in politics showing good examples and nurturing themselves and others with willful or conscious resistance, implementing the golden rule, and compassion.

5.8 Personal Theology

This author having considered and examined who are the Biblical poor, the church's doctrine of the preferential option for the poor, and how the church in Nigeria practices the fundamental option for the poor, develops his own theology regarding the poor. His theology is known as theology of empowerment. It is based on justice because God loves and appreciates justice. (Isiah 30:18) If God is a God of justice, then justice matters in every sphere. Justice is close to the heart of God, and doing justice is a critical part of every human being. Doing justice is our vocation (Micah 5:8).

Theology of empowerment means, advocating for the poor, marginalized and oppressed at all levels. It entails given the poor power, voice, courage, and enlightenment. It means standing with the vulnerable and underprivileged and walking towards equality in the system. It

requires recognizing the dignity of each person, and helping to fight injustice. It encourages all to realize that doers of justice are marked by an attitude and posture of responsibility and solidarity. This will galvanize all to look at the needs of the poor, and recognize that the poor do not exist for themselves alone they are human beings created in the image and likeness of God, and therefore deserves to be treated with dignity. It assists all to be aware that material poverty is never good but an evil to be opposed and rejected. It helps the poor to appreciate that poverty is not as a result of laziness or fate but fundamentally caused by structurally injustices that favor some, while others are dominated and neglected. It manifests to the poor that poverty is a complex reality and is not limited to its economic aspect. To be poor is to be inconsequential. Poverty makes one unable to provide the basic needs of life. It leads to untold hardship, crime and premature death. That is why theology of empowerment emboldens us to take sides with the poor, because neutrality helps the tormentor, never the victim. Silence encourages the torturer and never the tortured.

Theology of empowerment when applied to Nigeria, involves enablement, grass root mobilization, necessary information and education so that the poor will know they have right, dignity, and a share in the common good. They will be conscious of how to demand their right in a justified and proactive manner. This theology will be applied to the political, economic and cultural life of the poor in Nigeria.

Politically, this theology will empower the poor on how to elect good rulers who will apply the principles of the preferential option for the poor. It will inspire them on how to participate actively in politics, cast their votes justly without coercion, and money influence. It will enable the poor to resist bad governance, poor leadership, and corruption, demand accountability and confront all other factors and structures that dehumanize and abuse them.

Theology of empowerment, will stimulate the poor to realize that the government is treating symptom with all the programs they have evolved in Nigeria and not the disease. When the government starts treating the disease called poverty, they will include the poor themselves in the board, know their pains and needs then poverty will be alleviated. In essence, this theology will empower the poor to eschew segregation among themselves and realize they have one goal, and that the one goal is be your brothers' keeper. To be your brother's keeper entails caring for each other, and living the 'Ubuntu' spirit 'I am because we are' this indicates the necessity of the golden rule, justice, compassion, willful or conscious resistance in the society.

Economically, theology of empowerment will stimulate the poor on how to manage and be self-reliant. It will encourage them to help each other, be self- employed and be productive especially in the agricultural sector since some of them own parcels of land. This motivation is caritas in action among the poor at their own level. This love and inspiration will eventually transform their circumstances.

On the cultural level, it will arouse the poor and marginalized to develop a deep understanding of the complex social, economic and political realities in Nigeria and how it negatively affects them. This will lead them to examine their roles in Nigeria and seek out potential methods to work around the structures blocking them from rising. This type of consciousness will allow those on the fringe of the society to share their experiences and connect with others in the same or similar situation. Partaking will empower them to learn from one another and not feel as alone in their struggles and challenges. They can organize programs in which participants discuss how the political class, corruption, bad governance, lack of accountability, insecurity, climate change, flood, drought, herdsmen, kidnapping and displacement are impoverishing and affecting them. These programs can help them unravel their

internalized oppression and fear and improve their ability to confront direct or indirect power blocks.

Additionally, theology of empowerment will inform the poor that the resurrection of Jesus Christ holds profound significance for them, offering hope, assurance, and transformation. It will comfort them in their anguish, and strengthen their relationship with God. It motivates and endows them to push back the tide of suffering and evil in the present world, through word and deed, in mercy, compassion and justice in the name of Jesus. It kindles them to comprehend that the resurrection of Jesus Christ supersedes their agony and sorrow.

The writer feels that this theology will bring succor and relief to the poor. It would immensely assist to alleviate poverty in Nigeria, and even other African countries when applied with love, compassion and fraternity.

5.9 Conclusion

This chapter of the research exhibited who the poor are, and how they would be salvaged. It reported what the church would do to alleviate corruption in the country, because if it is not ameliorated the poor will continue to be voiceless and be marginalized. It emphasized the prophetic role of the church, and the necessity of the church to participate actively in politics as to correct some of superfluous behaviors of the political leaders. It showed how willful or conscious resistance encourages justice, compassion and the ‘Ubuntu’ spirit. In the chapter that follows, this thesis discusses some of the solutions to poverty in Nigeria.

Chapter Six: Solutions to the Problems of Poverty and Corruption in Nigeria

6.1 Introduction

This thesis has examined the causes and indicators of poverty in previous chapters. It will in this chapter demonstrate some solutions to the consequences of poverty in Nigeria. Clearly, the solutions primarily will be indigenous things the political leaders, and individuals could do to assuage poverty and economic hardship.

The solutions to the problem of poverty and corruption in Nigeria should be foremost in live of every Nigeria. If other countries have accomplished it, Nigeria can also do it. For there to be a lasting solution, it will be significant and necessary that the solutions will be indigenous, that is originating from Nigeria and Nigerians. It is because of this that this section will proffer socio-economic and political solutions to the challenges and nightmare of poverty and corruption.

6.2 Socio-Economic Solutions

This fragment elucidates and focuses on the Socio-economic solutions. To be illuminated are improvement of infrastructure, Reduction of the cost of Governance, Reward and Recognition of hard work, Right and adequate implementations of policies.

6.2.1 Improvement of Infrastructure

To alleviate poverty in Nigeria is a task that involves all and sundry. Even though it is not easy the government, corporations and individuals are to participate actively. This portion will expound it.

To reduce poverty, the provision of adequate infrastructure services by the government is a sine qua non. Infrastructure plays a vital role in the sustainable economic growth and human development. According to S. A. Olagoke,

> Infrastructure serves as the very core of economic and social development; it also contributes to raising the standard of living and quality of life. It serves as the bed rock practically in contemporary activities. Invariably, it contributes in raising the living conditions and quality of life which comprises of education, health, medical care, industry and agriculture. In fact it acts as both engine and a product of economic and social development.[1]

In effect, infrastructural development is a catalyst to nation building. The improvement of infrastructure in Nigeria will accelerate human progress. The reality is that, good roads, good health facilities, and uninterrupted electric supply will enhance both human and economic development.

Economic infrastructure development in Nigeria, such as power, telecommunications, piped water supply, urban railways, urban transport, seaports, waterways, and airports, create employment for people. It grants access to new income-earning opportunities for the poor, and reduces poverty. It encourages both foreign and local investors. For instance, good network roads, railways, and good water transportations, will enable farmers to easily transport their produces from rural areas to urban areas for sale. According to K. A. Familoni, "Economic infrastructure has played a very significant positive role in the growth performance of countries in recent times. Where development of economic infrastructures has followed a national, well-coordinated and harmonized path growth and development has received a big boost."[2]

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[1] S. A. Olagoke, "How Best to Develop Nigeria: A Leadership Question" (paper presentation, conference organized by Shafauden in Islam at Shefauden Ishat, Saturday 24, 2015), 5-7.

[2] K. A. Familoni, "The Role of Economic and Social Infrastructure in Economic Development: A Global View," Central Bank of Nigeria, accessed February 19, 2024, https://www.cbn.gov.ng/out/Publications/reports/occasionalpapers/RD/2004/Jos-02-2.pdf.

Remarkably, economic infrastructure can expand the productive capacity of the economy by increasing the quantity and quality of such infrastructure. Again improvements in maintenance of the infrastructure will enhance the quality of the existing infrastructure and give rise to a vent for surplus. Better management of economic infrastructure will have positive output, and lower production costs.

Another socio-economic factor that will assist to minimize poverty in Nigeria is agriculture. Agriculture as the cultivation of land surface, raising of animals, fish and crops is a very vital sector in any economy of the world, it not only provides employment for a large portion of the populace but also ensures food security, which is very essential for development. Infoguide Nigeria states, "Nigeria is a developing country, and the importance of agriculture in the country cannot be undermined because agriculture supplies the basic necessities of human life (food), it also provides inputs and raw materials for industrial use, and it also gives Nigeria the opportunity to export some of its agricultural products to other countries of the world."[3] Evidently, without agriculture in Nigeria, survival will be difficult because food items will be imported into the country which will make food items expensive and eventually make life difficult for ordinary citizens. Agriculture is a source of foreign exchange, alleviates poverty, contributes to the national income and will supply other industries with raw materials. It is needless to point out; that if the agricultural sector of any nation is still stagnated at subsistence levels that nation will be backward.

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[3] "10 Roles of Agriculture in Nigeria Economic Development," InfoGuide Nigeria, accessed February 19, 2024, https://infoguidenigeria.com/role-of-agriculture-in-nigeria-economic-development/.

Agriculture, contributes to the diversification of the economy as noted above; Nigeria is currently a mono-economy country. For Nigeria to progress economically, it needs to diversify so as to have a dependable economy. Agriculture is one sure means for Nigeria to progress. Presently, Nigeria depends only on oil for development which is part of the reason why the nation is crawling, and borrowing from other countries and organizations. Apparently, before the discovery of oil, agriculture used to be the main stay of the economy. It is irritating why the nation suddenly stopped investing on agriculture. Ibrahim Mohammad mentions, "Before the discovery of oil in commercial quantity agriculture used to be the backbone or mainstay of Nigeria economy the various communities produce a diversity of crops and this was a reflection of their diverse physical environment food crops include yam, cocoyam, cassava, … palm oil, cocoa and groundnut."[4] Essentially, if the government and individuals will invest in agriculture and have effective management that will boost the economy, reduce hunger, enhance food security, and drastically minimize poverty. It will lead to industrialization, and sustainable economy. Nigeria will be exporting some of her agricultural produce. Agriculture will be a source of income both for the government and individuals. It will help to curb malnutrition and anemia. Evidently, any plan for full scale national economic development in the black world especially Nigeria which is not firmly based on the development of agricultural production on a mass and comprehensive scale would very soon be seen to be so much wishful thinking. It would be like trying to build a skyscraper on a foundation of shifting sand. Investment in agriculture will make Nigeria as a developing nation to be on the path of development, and more

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[4] Ibrahim Mohammad, "The Role of Agriculture in Socio-Economic Development," Academia.edu, accessed February 19, 2024, https://www.academia.edu/20751189/The_Role_of_Agriculture_in_Socio-economic_Development.

importantly the agricultural sector has a key role to play in providing job for the rural settlers and also a source of raw materials for our urban industries, thereby making it a major source of employment in both rural and urban areas.

Social Infrastructure such as education and health are necessary for the amelioration of poverty in Nigeria. Education is very crucial source of economic progress. Education will raise the productivity and creativity of Nigerians, as well as stimulate entrepreneurship and technological breakthroughs. These factors will lead to greater output and economic growth. Education is one of the most powerful instruments for reducing poverty and inequality. Education sets the foundation for sustained economy. Denison alludes, "Education is a very important source of economic growth. Even though education may be a social investment, it is also an economic investment since it enhances the stock of human capital."[5] Therefore, if Nigeria will truly invest in qualitative education, poverty and corruption will be minimized. This is because education is a fundamental source of development. No country can accomplish sustainable economic development without substantial investment in human capital. Education will enrich Nigerians to understand themselves and the world. It will profit Nigerians to improve the quality of their lives. Education will support Nigerians to secure economic and social progress and improve income distribution. Education will help to curb corruption. Education as the process by which people acquire or impart basic knowledge, will help Nigerians to develop vital life skills for employment, understand social norms so that ethnic conflict will be minimized. It contributes to the development of sound judgment and reasoning, and will kindle

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[5] Edward F. Denison, "Education, Economic Growth and Gaps Information," *Journal of Political Economy* 70, no. 5, part 2 (1962): 124-128.

Nigerians to learn how to discern right from wrong and be compassionate to each other and eschew hostility. It will benefit Nigerians to navigate life and contribute to the society. It assists to alleviate poverty and hunger, and contributes to people being economically responsible and independent. Education aids to realize that educated workforce is essential to creating economic prosperity.

Health, like education, is a very important factor in the socio-economic development of any nation especially Nigeria. Health is one of the major determinants of labor, productivity and efficiency. It is impossible to work and earn a living when one's health is in jeopardy. Essentially, good health is central to human happiness and well-being that contributes significantly to prosperity and wealth and even progress, as healthy populations are more productive, save and live longer. Jhingan mentions,

> Public health deals with the environment in which economic activities take place. If the environment were conducive, it would be permissive of accelerated growth and development. Public health measures include the improvement of environmental sanitation both in rural and urban areas, removal of stagnant and polluted water, slum clearance, better housing, clean water supply, better sewage facilities, control of communicable diseases, provision of medical and health services especially in maternal and child welfare, health education, family planning and above all, for the training of health and medical personnel.[6]

Good health will motivate Nigerians to perform their daily task in a smooth manner. Healthy lifestyle can prevent chronic diseases and long-term illnesses. It becomes imperative that for Nigeria to alleviate poverty, investment in the health sector is very vital, both by the government and good willed individuals. For example, the construction of hospitals and equipping them with modern facilities would curtail Nigerians from going overseas to seek medical attention. It will

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[6] M. L. Jhingan, *The Economics of Development and Planning (with Special Reference to India)*, 8th ed. (Delhi: Vikas, 1975), 151.

reduce the risks and inconveniences of travelling. The money spent overseas will remains at home and will be plunged into the economy. It will create confidence in the poor who are unable to raise the money to travel overseas. The rich will no longer intimidate the poor or make them feel inferior because they can go overseas for medical attention. It will restore equality and human dignity among Nigerians. Nigerians will no more be frightened by poor diagnoses. They will have confidence that they will be given adequate treatment. Instead of Nigerians going overseas to seek medical attention training health personnel in various areas of specialty will motivate Nigerians to seek medical attention easily, thereby keeping the work force healthy. Good health care system will contribute to Nigerians handling stress efficiently and effectively. Clearly it will aid Nigerians living longer, and more actively. It will improve the emotional, mental and physical well-being of Nigerians as to live more decently and harmoniously. Good medical services should be afforded and affordable to everyone, whether rich or poor.

6.2.2 Reduce the Cost of Governance

Another essential thing to be done as a solution to poverty in Nigeria is the reduction of the cost of governance. This all important point will be explicated and will be the focal point of this subheading.

There is a growing concern among Nigerians and policy makers on the increasing cost of governance in Nigeria and the rest of sub-Saharan Africa. This concern has become overbearing owing to the huge government spending on recurrent activities at the expense of capital projects. In Nigeria, government at all levels Federal, State, and local government commits more financial resources to the maintenance of political administrative structures and institutions and their personnel than carry out developmental infrastructures in the various areas of jurisdiction. O C.

Agu posits, "The high cost of governance is particularly worrisome considering the fact that government expenditure in the past has not translated into any meaningful development in terms of the improvement in lives of the people, as Nigeria still ranks among the poorest nation of the world."[7] If the high cost of governance in Nigeria is reduced, poverty, inequality, corruption, will be diminished. Reduction of the high cost of governance will help in the improvement of the standard living of the people. It will be beneficial so that there will be resources left for infrastructural development.

The high cost of governance stems from the presidential system of government of the country which has been identified as one of the most expensive in the world. Julius Ikharehon and Gregory Ogbeide lament,

> Nigeria runs 37 separate governments, consisting of the federal and state governments, one of the largest in the world. At the federal level, the president is constitutionally obliged to appoint a minister from each of the 36 states, plus Abuja. In effect he has to appoint 37 ministers. … At the state level, the situation is pretty much the same. The governors are constitutionally obliged to appoint not fewer than 12 commissioners. But in actual fact, at both levels, the president and governors find a way of circumventing even these large constitutional limits by adding a coterie of special advisers and other numerous idles aids. In addition, the country has to run over 700 local governments with the same overstaffing as the federal and state governments. When you factor in the vast expenditure on the National Assembly, it is a prescription for economic and financial disaster at all levels of government.[8]

This demonstrates that Nigeria has long list of ministers, special advisers, and special assistants with retinue of aides with high remuneration that suck the country dry. Evidently, government huge investment in recurrent expenditure has rendered the Nigerian state ineffective in responding to the demands of the citizens through the provision of human needs such as good

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[7] O. C. Agu, "Democracy and the Cost of Governance in Nigeria," *Journal of Culture and Society and Development* 2 (2013): 41-50.

[8] Julius I. Ikharehon and Gregory I. Ogbeide, "Challenges and Implications of High Cost of Governance in Nigeria," *International Journal of Governance and Development* 4, no. 2 (2015): 1-18.

roads, steady power supply, hospitals, quality education, quality shelter and other infrastructures. No country in the world including those of the developed countries can do anything meaningful where a large part of their earnings is spent on administrative structures rather than on capital investment. This situation has led Nigeria to continuously borrow, and owe workers all the time. Ikharehon and Ogbeide support,

> One of the major sources of economic drains on a poor country is the diversion of vital economic and financial resources to a bloated bureaucracy that is largely unproductive and contributes little or nothing to economic growth in the country. Economic growth is more difficult when a country, such as Nigeria, spends 70 percent of its entire budget on public administration, including the building of vast secretariats all over the country.[9]

This means that the excessive numbers of government functionaries and their assistants with large remuneration is disproportionately high relative to productivity. The cost of running Nigeria is one problem policy makers have refused to address. Those who did so, did it half-heartedly and the country is gradually grinding to a halt. If this could be addressed, Nigeria would be saving billions of naira that could pumped into other productive venture.

The high cost of governance is not only perceived on the type of presidential system in Nigeria, it is also reflected on the soaring cost of foreign trips, salaries of law makers, and maintenance of presidential air fleet. The presidents of Nigeria both past and present spend billions of naira on foreign trips. What is irritating and sapping the economy of the country is that the presidents travel with their entourage, top aides, ministers, officials of the presidential villa and members of the National Assembly. This is absurd because the number is superfluous as some of them were not involved in the summit. What would those officials be doing at the summit?

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[9] Ikharehon and Ogbeide, "High Cost of Governance in Nigeria," 1-18.

To reduce poverty in Nigeria, the high cost of governance has to be reviewed. More money has to be committed to infrastructural development than to bureaucracy. All sectors of government in Nigeria must jointly address the critical problem of an over blown bureaucracy and the vastly increased cost of running such a huge bureaucracy on which we could be spending as much as 80% of our total resources. Okeke Martin Ifeanyi and Eme Okechukwu Innocent maintain,

> At the comparative level, very few countries match the cost of governance, particularly the cost of general administration in Nigeria. The United States, the largest economy in the world, with a GNP of $13 trillion per annum has a federal cabinet not exceeding 20 less than half that of Nigeria. The cost of general administration represents less than 10% of the federal budget of the US. Contrast that with the figures in Nigeria ranging from at least 60% to as much as 80%. The rich countries spend on the general administration of their countries an average of only 12%. On the other hand poor countries, which can ill afford to do so, tend to spend a lot more in the running of their countries.[10]

If the high cost of governance is re-evaluated, it will reduce the money spent in unnecessary things such as keeping many guest houses, many aides that are irrelevant, long convoys, chartering planes, servicing politicians that do not add value to the society, engaging in epicurean life and staying in costly hotels. The money saved will be used to provide the necessary infrastructure that will create employment and better the living standard of the people. It will assist the country to borrow less, pay workers as at when due, and service the debts owed by the nation.

Additionally, the nation should down size the number of ministries, ministers, civil service, and avoid the duplication of roles. The salaries and other emoluments of public office

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[10] D. Fafowora, "Public Service and Cost of Governance," *The Nation*, September 15, 2011.

holders, particularly members of the National Assembly, should be reduced and made public. Ifeanyi and Eme elaborate,

> There is now a broad consensus in the nation that the size and cost of the civil service is unsustainable and that it should be reduced considerably as it represents a major constraint on the nation's economic growth and development. The practice of treating the civil service as some form of political, ethnic, and religious patronage is one that we need to jettison. What we need is a slimmer and more efficient civil service than we now have.[11]

The reduction of ministries and civil service will curtail corruption which is endemic in Nigeria. It will encourage transparency in government and decrease bogus budget by the government. This will help to check ghost workers, which are non- existent employees added to the payroll, and their wages are collected by corrupt politicians and civil servants. Apparently, it will be easier for the accountant general of the federation to publish quarterly expenditure of the federal government. It will enhance budgetary savings. The savings accruing could be used to provide crucial amenities needed for economic growth of the nation. The cost of governance is extremely high as has been shown, to reduce it will be valuable. To minimize the bogus cost of governance the constitution of the country would be amended. The amendment will also assist to accommodate other proposed positive changes so that the nation will grow economically, socially and politically.

6.2.3 Reward and Recognition of Hard Work

Employee recognition is a method to make your employees feel appreciated. It is acknowledging employees for positive performance. It is the recognition of the hard and

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[11] Martin I. Okeke and Innocent O. Eme, "Cost of Governance and its Implications on Nigeria's Economy," *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review (Kuwait Chapter)* 4, no. 5 (2015): 44-61.

excellent job of employees as one of the solutions to poverty that will be expounded. The issue of the reward that employees receive for the performance of their jobs has continued to generate an unending controversy in Nigeria. Rewards which people receive for the performance of any duty assigned to them globally is of vital importance to the employees because it is one of the main reasons for acceptance of an offer of employment. The more attractive the rewards, the more easily the applicants consider accepting the offer of employment. Marcus Garvey Orji notes,

> Money in whatever form is sweet to behold and stay with. It energies the spirit and gladdens the heart of men. It is one if not the best incentive to motivate and influence work habit of… employees. By motivating the work force, management creates will to work which is necessary for the achievement of organizational goals. Managers need to have highly efficient and productive staff members.[12]

The contract of employment therefore brings the employers and employees in a relationship that is binding. This bond is strengthened by rewards which the employer offers and which the employee in turn accepts.

In Nigeria unfortunately, the limited number of salary reviews both in the public and private sectors, the inappropriateness of training programs, as well as the inadequate access to housing and medical facilities cum low prospects of promotion has brought about a situation where there have been persistent expressions of dissatisfaction among public institution or sector workers. Low performance in most cases is the product of dissatisfaction. Gerald Emejulu attests,

> In Nigeria, the civil service seems to harbor the largest size of unmotivated staff of all the public agencies. This is as a result of issues ranging from poor and irregular salaries to lack of empowerment by not providing opportunities for capacity building and skills

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[12] Marcus G. Orji and Martha E. Ezimmuo, "Effect of Financial Incentives on Employee Work Habit and Performance in Nigeria Public Enterprises," *International Journal of Research in Finance and Management* 2, no. 2 (2019): 13-22.

> development. All these culminate in inefficiency, poor performance, redundancy and low productivity of the workers.[13]

Sadly, the poor motivation of workers in Nigeria is as a result of poor planning, ineffective implementation of policies, shortage in basic amenities and lack of accountability. To curb low productivity among Nigeria workers, incentive becomes essential.

Some of the sure ways to motivate Nigerian workers are by review of salary, appropriate training programs, adequate access to housing, medical facilities, and regular promotion of workers. When workers are motivated, their performance will change, and this will lead to increased productivity. When productivity is increased, there will be progress, and this will aid the economy of the country to grow. When workers are rewarded financially, such as increase in salaries, wages, and other financial incentives, their purchasing power will appreciate, thereby empowering the workers to provide for their families, live decently and have shelter. This will enable them to afford food, go to hospitals and have savings in case of unforeseen circumstances by this hunger and poverty will be alleviated. Again, when Nigerian workers are paid adequately and on time, that will put in check incessant industrial actions, promote their human dignity, and ameliorate corruption and indiscipline. When indiscipline and venality are curtailed, workers will have job satisfaction, and benefit from the increased productivity. Supporting, Marcus Garvey Orji and Martha Ebere Ezimmuo advocate,

> Good remuneration has been found over the years to be one of the policies any organization can adopt to increase their workers performance and thereby increase the organizations productivity…with present global economic trend, most employers of labor have realized the fact that for their organizations to compete favorably, the performance of their employees goes a long way in determining the success of the organization.[14]

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[13] Gerald Emejulu, "Employee Rewards and Its Performance Implication: A South Eastern Nigeria Experience," *Asian Journal of Economics, Business and Accounting* 15, no. 2 (2020): 9-13.

[14] Orji and Ezimmuo, "Effect of Financial Incentives," 13-22.

Plainly, when employees are specially recognized for the performance of their duties, they tend to put in more effort to ensure that they constantly receive these recognitions. Employee recognition is so important it helps workers not to burnout easily. If how hard the Nigerian employees are recognized that will encourage them to recover easily from burnout.

Furthermore, Nigerian workers can be encouraged by sending them to training programs be it short or long courses, others include regular seminars, workshops, provision of recreational facilities, security, friendly work environment where tasks can be performed more conveniently and granting of soft loans. Adequate training opportunities and career development programs motivates higher performance among employees. Emejulu confirms, "Apart from using staff development to enhance employee satisfaction and compliance with employment related laws, it also makes employees feel confident that they are competent and therefore qualified to be where they are in the organization."[15] Remarkably, employees are committed to jobs they perceive to have a possibility of satisfying their needs through the reward they will receive for the work done. This will increase their performance, efficiency and strengthen the relationship between the employer and the employee. It will lead them to have favorable disposition, be goal oriented and have positive outcome. As noted above, incentive to Nigerian employees will play a crucial role in discouraging corruption, crime, human trafficking, indolence, fraud and poverty.

Even though at times the country may not have the resources to consistently provide a raise whenever employee performs well. Cash rewards do not have to be permanent salary upgrades. Gift cards, tickets for concerts, free dinner or providing better office space or additional vacation time is a good way to make them feel appreciated. To reward hard work as

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[15] Emejulu, "Employee Rewards and Performance Implication," 9-13.

manifested will encourage the socio-economic progress of the country. This is because when workers are fulfilled productivity will be high and stead that will help to fight poverty.

6.2.4 Implementation of Right Policies

The implementation of right policies will help to alleviate poverty in Nigeria. What it means to have appropriate policy and its execution will follow. To have the proper and suitable policy means that Nigeria has to embark on a comprehensive reform program. The program will be based on economic empowerment and development strategy. Nigeria with her large population and abundant resources is expected to have progressed economically, socially, and politically but that is not the case because of the non- implementation of right policies. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala and Philip Osafo-Kwaako articulate,

> With a population of 140 million people, Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa, with a GDP second only to South Africa's. Yet, following several years of military rule and poor economic management, Nigeria experienced a prolonged period of economic stagnation, rising poverty levels, and the decline of its public institutions. By most measures, human development indicators in Nigeria were comparable to that of other least developed countries while wide spread corruption undermined the effectiveness of various public expenditure programs.[16]

The lack of public investments in previous decades meant that there were severe infrastructure bottlenecks that hindered private sector activities. In particular, the poor condition of the power sector, roads, health institutions and schools illustrate the severity of Nigeria's infrastructure deficit.

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[16] Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala and Philip Osafo-Kwaako, "Nigeria's Economic Reforms: Progress and Challenges," *Brookings Global Economy and Development*, no. 6 (January 3, 2008):1-30, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1080251#.

In the Macroeconomic policy implementation, Nigeria has not performed very well. This has occasioned the economy of the country to plummet, lowered the standard of living of the people, and brought overt inflation. Okonjo-Iweala and Osafo-Kwaako note,

> A major challenge for the Nigerian economy was its macroeconomic volatility driven largely by external terms of trade shocks and the country's large reliance on oil export earnings. By some measures, Nigeria's economy ranked among the most volatile in the world…public expenditures also closely followed current revenues, implying that fluctuations in oil earning were transferred directly into the domestic economy. Fluctuations in public expenditure reflected both the over reliance on oil earnings and weak fiscal discipline by previous government.[17]

The result is that if the nation applies macroeconomic policy well, it will increase the quality of government public spending. It will assist to complete capital projects; motivate long term-planning, moreover, the accrual of arrears for civil servants salaries and contractors will be paid. If the macroeconomic policy is followed judiciously poverty and hunger will be minimized. There will be diversification of the economy, and the reliance on oil alone will no longer be tenable. Okonjo-Iweala and Osafo-Kwaako express, "A central objective of the macroeconomic was to stabilize the Nigerian economy, to improve budgetary planning and execution, and to provide a platform to sustained economic diversification and non-oil growth."[18] The expansion of the country's economy will create employment, workers will be paid and receive their benefits at the appropriate time, inflation will be checked, government savings will be increased, there will be improvement in debts management, and borrowing will be curtailed above all, quality of life will be promoted.

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[17] Okonjo-Iweala and Philip Osafo-Kwaako, "Nigeria's Economic Reforms," 1-30.
[18] Okonjo-Iweala and Philip Osafo-Kwaako, "Nigeria's Economic Reforms," 1-30.

In addition to following the Macroeconomic policy, Nigeria should as well implement the institutional and governance policy. The blight of Nigeria as a country is corruption. It has hindered the progress of the nation in all ramifications. Corruption has not created a conducive environment for business and has scared many investors from the country. Okonjo-Iweala and Osafo-Kwaako observe,

> A bane of Nigeria's existence since the oil boom of 1970s has been the reputation of corruption, largely justified, but also partly as a result of perception. Corruption and poor governance affected growth and public service delivery in Nigeria in various ways. Corruption distorts the climate for doing business and serves as a tax on private investments. In a corrupt environment, resources for capital and other needed investments, such as in infrastructure, health and education are often diverted.[19]

Indubitably, corruption decreased popular accountability and political responsiveness. It has increased frustration, lack of trust and hardship among the citizens. Moreover, it motivated the diversion of talents and resources.

Apparently, if Nigeria implements rightly institutional and governance policy, anti-corruption measures will be respected and utilized to fight corruption. This will have positive impact; there will be overt progress, transparency, economic growth, poverty amelioration, investors attracted, employment available, fraud, bribery assuaged, and just process followed. Okonjo-Iweala and Osafo-Kwaako establish,

> Tackling corruption under recent economic reforms required two main elements: first, embedding anti-corruption measures in a comprehensive reform program, and second, conducting diagnostic studies to identify specific areas in which corruption had a high negative impact on the public purse. By embedding anti-corruption programs in the reform agenda, the battle against corruption was perceived to be integral part of a broader exercise of economic reform needed to stimulate growth and address poverty in Nigeria.[20]

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[19] Okonjo-Iweala and Philip Osafo-Kwaako, "Nigeria's Economic Reforms," 1-30.
[20] Okonjo-Iweala and Philip Osafo-Kwaako, "Nigeria's Economic Reforms," 1-30.

There is no gain saying the fact that instituting anti- corrupt measures and good governance will assist to reduce inflation of contract costs, award of contracts for non-existent projects, over-invoicing, and diversion of public funds to foreign banks. The diversion of public funds is where Nigeria strongly requires adequate help from western countries to help minimize corruption and poverty. Such funds should not be accepted by foreign banks especially if the funds are from politicians. They should be asked to invest such funds in Nigeria, by this stealing of public funds may be reduced; checks and balances will be promoted. Essentially, refusing such funds from Nigeria politicians will improve the economy and the image of Nigeria internationally, and at home. The application of proper strategies as expressed above will greatly alleviate poverty because it creates a palatable business environment.

Improving the domestic business climate is another policy that will help Nigeria to progress. This favorable business atmosphere will be displayed. In Nigeria, unnecessary and bottle neck administrative policies, do not allow domestic business to flourish. Okonjo-Iweala and Osafo-Kwaako narrate, "Uncoordinated and bureaucratic regulatory procedures often hinder private sector activities in Nigeria. … However additional challenges remain, such as computerizing land registration titles in various states, accelerating customs reforms, and increasing the efficiency of judicial system."[21] There are hip cups that hinder local investors, such as political set up, style of governance, logistics and domestic business regulations. These undue complications plunge the country into economic quagmire because of the inexplicable challenges investors meet before they start their businesses.

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[21] Okonjo-Iweala and Philip Osafo-Kwaako, "Nigeria's Economic Reforms," 1-30.

Invariably, improving the domestic climate for doing business remains a priority for Nigeria policymakers so as to encourage investors. This is because, in a domestic environment, a firm can predict what customers prefer easily. Again, domestic business will invest substantially in analyzing what customers from other countries are likely to purchase, and how to market to them. If domestic business is able to have friendly business environment, it will lessen importation of foreign goods, and government will save some money that will facilitate the provision and maintenance of infrastructure. Infant mortality, premature death, and maternal mortality will be minimized. Likewise, hunger, and abject poverty will be expunged because people are employed and earn money as salary to take care of their basic needs. Okonjo-Iweala and Osafo-Kwaako support, "Ultimately, Nigeria's central challenge is one of building strong domestic institutions to support long term growth and development. … When domestic institutions are strong and functional, day-to-day political configurations are less important for private sector investment decisions."[22] As stated already, the economic advantages of domestic investments are tremendous. It will assist to improve the standard of living, and in the development of infrastructure, such as roads, hospitals, electricity and schools. It will also help the banking sector to grow. When banks are able to give loans to domestic investors, and they pay back as at when due, and with the desired interests banks will remain afloat. If banks are buoyant, and functional there will be employment.

Undoubtedly, the reform on tackling unrest is another essential policy that Nigeria needs to apply urgently. Conflict has caused terrible set-back in Nigeria. It has promoted damage, loss of life and displacement. Why the modification of discontent will boost the economy will be

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[22] Okonjo-Iweala and Philip Osafo-Kwaako, "Nigeria's Economic Reforms," 1-30.

explicated. Unrest or insecurity in all parts of Nigeria is worrisome to all and sundry. Nigeria is experiencing a dramatic upsurge in everyday violence, including abduction, religiously motivated attacks, assaults of armed gangs, and police brutality. The authorities are failing to contain the chaos. Ebenezar Obadare reports,

> The heightened activity of gunmen and armed non-state groups owes itself to degraded state capacity and weakened law enforcement. The country's kidnap- for- ransom industry has surged…In some cases, security agencies have been accused of complicity with criminal groups. In addition to ethno-religious tensions, attacks by herdsmen on farming settlements seem driven by desertification, compounded by intensified drought due to climate change. Between 2017 and 2020, herdsmen reportedly killed 2,539 people in as many as 654 attacks.[23]

This demonstrates that the country has been grappling with high level of violence over the past decade; insecurity, kidnapping, and the nefarious activities of Boko Haram and Fulani Herdsmen. It is sad to note, that the Fulani herdsmen have been a threat to the economic, political and social security of the nation and a major factor associated with underdevelopment, because it discourages both local and foreign investments, reduces the quality of life, destroys human and social capital, damages relationship between citizens and the states, thus undermining democracy, rule of law and the ability of the country to promote development. Edieya Davidson contributes,

> Clashes between farmers and herdsmen have left in its trail heavy losses of lives and property. These losses of lives have adversely affected farming activities and other related businesses and socio-economic activities. This has resulted in a drastic reduction in farm outputs, a development that has heightened the fear of hunger. Already most farmers in the affected states have abandoned farms and schools for fear of being attacked by the Herdsmen.[24]

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[23] Ebenezer Obadare, "Escalating Violence is Putting Nigeria's Future on the Line," Council on Foreign Relations, June 9, 2022, https://www.cfr.org/in-brief/escalating-violence-putting-nigerias-future-line.

[24] Edieya Davidson, "The Menace of Fulani Herdsmen Attack and Its Effects on the Socio-Economic Development of Nigeria," SSRN, October 27, 2019, http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3476374.

Devastating as it is, several farmers have been displaced and dispossessed of their farms by armed men believed to be herdsmen. Gains recorded in agricultural sector of the economy, especially in the area of food production, suffer serious setback and farmers are reluctant to go back to their farms. The obvious challenges of shortage of food production are many like hunger, malnutrition, anemia and at times death, which may deplete the working population.

If Nigeria, implements the policy in stemming violence, and the activities of herdsmen like establishing ranches to eschew continuous clash between herders and farmers, that will encourage investors to invest in Nigeria, and will lead to increase inflow of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). With security assured institutional investors will no longer look for other stable economies to invest their money Nigeria will be attractive to them. Their appetite to invest, buy or rent from the product of investment in Nigeria will increase. In addition to enticing investors, employment will be provided, there will be peaceful co-existence, hunger and poverty will be reduced. There will be no more fear of conflict and clashes between herdsmen and farmers.

Vandalization, and oil theft pose serious threat to the economic growth of Nigeria. As a matter of necessity, the country needs to consolidate her policy on illegal theft of oil and bunkering, for economic growth. The damaging of oil pipelines on purpose, and the stealing of oil, and how checking it significantly will improve the economy and reduce poverty will be show cased. The upsurge in oil theft, through lifting of crude oil beyond the licensed amount, using forged bill of lading, and the direct hacking into pipelines, promoted by unpatriotic and greedy Nigerians and their foreign collaborators is painful, and has dire consequences on the economic progress of the country. Green Igbogi and Ikpechukwu Njoku relate,

> Oil theft has considerable economic, social, environmental, governance and security implications. This criminal act has contributed significantly to poverty and degradation that exists in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria today. The issue of oil theft in the Niger Delta has been a problem for a long time…Large scale illegal oil bunkering has become an increasingly significant issue in recent years. The violence in Niger Delta is predicated on the activities of an illegal oil stolen syndicate that collaborate with foreigners to fuel the civil unrest with a view to creating opportunity to enable them engage in their illicit oil deals in the creeks. Another negative impact of illegal oil bunkering is environmental damage. The social and environmental costs of oil theft have been very extensive. They include destruction of wildlife and biodiversity, loss of fertile soil, pollution of drinking water, degradation of farmland and damage to aquatic ecosystems, all of which have caused serious health problems for the inhabitants of area surrounding illicit trade.[25]

The maritime illegal oil trade has affected the economy negatively and the volume of illegal oil trading is high and as such deals have shattering effect on the economy.

Evidently, if Nigeria, implements the policy on oil theft this will reduce the destruction of oil pipelines, bunkering and oil theft, there will be no more disruption of the exports of crude oil. Dauda S. Garuba explains, "There is need for the maritime authorities to step up the fight against illegal oil trading in the country. In effect, there should be adequate and effective sanctions for offenders to serve as a deterrent. … There should be proper legal frame work to prosecute culprits involved in illegal oil trading. The practice of selective treatment for offenders should be stopped since our constitution states that all individuals are equal before the law." Once this is done, there will be a considerable improvement in the economic, social, environmental, governance of the nation. Fertile land will be preserved, and People will be able to farm and harvest bountifully. Aquatic life animals will be conserved. People will be empowered to buy, send their children to school and have shelter. Human dignity will be promoted and crime

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[25] Dauda S. Garuba, "Trans-border Economic Crimes, Illegal Oil Bunkering and Economic Reforms in Nigeria," *Global Consortium on Security Transformation Policy Brief Series*, no. 15 (2010):1-23, https://www.academia.edu/10218364/Trans_Border_Economic_Crimes_Illegal_Oil_Bunkering_and_Economic_Reforms_in_Nigeria.

reduced because people are gainfully engaged. Good health will be ensured because pollution and biodiversity are effectively controlled. Qualitative health will help to check untimely death, and other health hazards that gulp money will be sustained. As noted before now, to stop this illicit oil theft, Nigeria needs maximally the collaboration of the western world. They should consider seriously disassociating themselves from this illegal business, and cease to patronize all those involved in this infamous act. This subsection, has evaluated how infrastructural improvement, reduction of the cost of governance, implementation of right policies and others will assist to curtail poverty when enacted.

6.3 Political Solutions

As have displayed, as there are socio-economic solutions, so also are there Political resolutions to poverty in Nigeria. Political answers to poverty will be elucidated in this subtitle. Among the political solutions to be examined are; Transparency and Accountability in Government, Checks and balances in government and private sector, Empowerment of the judiciary/Legislators, minimizing godfathers in politics and stop the culture of recycling political office holders, and the essence of willful or conscious resistance.

6.3.1 Transparency and Accountability

Transparency and accountability are important in every facet of life especially in governance. It stimulates trust, progress and it is a prerequisite for building a constructive, high-performance culture. The essence of clearness and answerability as a response to poverty will be examined in this subcategory.

Nigeria needs transparency and accountability to grow and to develop rapidly. But because of corruption, accountability has been lacking in the public service and among functional politicians. Lack of accountability and transparency has thrown Nigerians into unquantifiable poverty, hunger, unemployment and even shame. When it comes to accountability Nigeria has always been at the bottom. According to Ezeibe Christian Chukwuebuka and Iwuoha Victor Chidubem, "In 2002 Nigeria ingloriously bagged the second most corrupt country in the world; in 2006, the country was rated sixth, all bestowed by the Transparent International."[26] This indicates that integrity, responsibility, clarity are not maintained in the public service. This has exacerbated the country to lag behind in spite of the rich natural and human resources it has. It is bizarre that after over sixty years of self- rule Nigeria is still lacking in accountability and transparency.

If Nigeria's leadership, elected politicians, public officers, at the national, state, and local government levels are to be liable, transparent and corrupt free, Nigeria will progress and develop in all ramifications. Essentially, development is a function of proper responsibility at the individual, organizational, national level. According to A. Ninalowo, "Accountability implies that government functionaries should be prepared to be answerable for their actions at all times to members of the public and be able to justify their actions at the level of moral and ethical standard."[27] This implies that the public should have an idea when money comes into government treasury and how the money will be utilized. This shows that trust is a vital

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[26] Christian Chukwuebuka Ezeibe and Victor Chidubem Iwuoha, "The Political Economy of Public Service Accountability in Nigeria," *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review* 1, no. 4 (November 2011): 8-16, https://www.academia.edu/3805833/The_Political_Economy_of_Public_Service_Accountability_in_Nigeria.

[27] Adebayo Ninalowo, "Democratic Governance, Regional Integration and Development in Africa," Development Policy Management Forum, April 2003, 1-38, http://www.hubrural.org/IMG/pdf/democratic_regional_integration_dpmf.pdf.

prerequisite for appropriate management of resources for development in any society. Essentially, accountability connotes a sense of responsibility, transparency, liability, controllability, and responsiveness. It is core to good governance, and accelerates efficiency and effectiveness.

Fundamentally, accountability is a necessary condition for preventing the abuse of power. Responsibility by all government agencies in the Nigeria will ensure that they meet their purposes and goals and be more responsive to the needs of the people. It will help to check embezzlement of funds by public officials, and by that workers will be paid enough. There will be improvement in infrastructure. Mismanagement of resources by politicians and government officials, diversion of funds will be minimized, and there will be a good response to the delivery of services. Chinelo Okekeocha attests, "Accountability is important in the public sector because both elected and non-elected officials need to show the public that they are performing their responsibilities in the best possible way and using the resources provided them effectively and efficiently."[28] Accountability promotes ethical and good governance. It influences investors to invest in the country, if it is perceived that government is trust worthy, transparent, and accountable to the people, both foreign and domestic investors will have full faith that their investments will not be put on hold. When the economy is on the wheel of progress citizens will enjoy a good quality of life. Accountability will instigate both public and private sectors to perform their duties to the best interest of the public and will ensure that officials take responsibility for their activities. Democracy needs accountability and transparency, with the

[28] Chinelo Okekeocha, "A Case Study of Corruption and Public Accountability in Nigeria" (master's thesis, Kennesaw State University, 2013), 1-39.

parliament executing a major role as regulator. If accountability and transparency are instituted in Nigeria, it will be a positive challenge to economic corruption and poverty. It has been accessed that transparency and accountability are pertinent for socio-economic progress of the country. If the nation imbibes the culture of responsibility Private businesses and other individuals will follow and economic improvement will set in.

6.3.2 Checks and Balances

Checks and balances under which separate branches are empowered to prevent actions by other branches are induced to share power is very essentially in Nigeria. Checks and balances are applied primarily in constitutional governments. They are fundamental importance in tripartite governments. It separates power among legislative, executive, and judicial branches. How maintaining checks and balances will favor the alleviation of poverty will be studied.

Checks and balances is a basic principle that if followed judiciously will assist Nigeria to grow. Nigeria is a democratic country and therefore believes that political power would be divided so that no one authority would have absolute powers, this entails that Separation of Powers is the base upon which the doctrine of checks and balances stand. According to Bartholomew Ikechukwu Ugwuanyi, Lucy Odiche Nworji, and A.A. Oruebuor,

> In almost all contemporary governmental systems, particularly in democratic climes, there exists separation of powers among the three arms of government. These three arms are the legislative arm that makes the laws, the executive arm that implements the laws and the judiciary arm that interprets the law. In essence, governmental powers are shared among these three arms. The idea of sharing of powers among these different arms of government is popularly known as the doctrine of separation of powers.[29]

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[29] Bartholomew Ikechukwu Ugwuanyi, Lucy Odiche Nworji, and A.A. Oruebuor, "Effecting Checks and Balances of Powers in the Local Government System in Nigeria: A Critical Discourse on the Experience and the Implications for Good Governance," *Journal of Policy and Development Studies* 9, no. 5 (November 2015): 11-21.

This signifies that checks and balances gives each branch some control of the actions of the others and requires cooperation among the branches. It minimizes the risk that one branch might completely take over the government or stray too far politically from the other branches. Moreover, the principle of checks and balances makes it imperative that no one branch of government should be able to get too far out of control without being put in check by the other. It modifies the separation of power.

Nigeria as a democratic state with a federal governmental arrangement practices the doctrine of separation of powers among the three arms of government as a fundamental constitutional principle it applies at the federal, state and local government tiers. The constitution of Nigeria supports this, "The constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria provides for a system of checks and balances to restrict the powers of each arm of government at both the federal, state and local government tiers."[30] This principle of checks and balances is enshrined in the constitution of Nigeria so that there will be no interference among the three arms of government and to avoid conflict.

If the separation of power otherwise referred to as the division of governmental powers is uphold and respected in Nigeria, it will forestall the temptation to corruption that exists in Nigeria, whereby the same persons have the powers to make laws and have in their hands, the powers to execute them. A. Appodarai articulates, "The basic justification for the doctrine of separation of powers is the chances of dictatorship or tyranny are reduced in so far as governmental powers are separated in terms of institutions and personnel."[31] Corruption has

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[30] Ugwuanyi, Nworji, and Oruebuor, "Effecting Checks and Balances of Powers," 11-21.
[31] A. Appodarai, *The Substance of Politics*, 10th ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 88.

been identified as a cankerworm in Nigeria, if corruption is minimized through checks and balances, Nigeria will progress in all facets. Bribery, fraud and stealing of state property and fund will be reduced. Again, if checks and balances are effectively operated in Nigeria it will prevent arbitrary exercise of power by any arm; it will ensure order, efficiency, discipline, and respect. Once there is discipline and order, Nigeria will have a conscientious leader that will move the country forward. Evidently, the promotion of Checks and balances in Nigeria will curb flagrant unaccountability of public resources, reckless, irresponsible expenditure of public funds, and will motivate liberty. It will assist to curb the culture of prebendalism, non-performance, abuse of power, and instability.

Furthermore, if there is significant operation of checks and balances of power in Nigeria, and the independence of the judiciary, democracy will be sustained. If the Nigerian judiciary is independent, and does not have undue pressure especially from the executive, justice, fairness, transparency and answerability will be stimulated. P.F.U. Nwankwo reports that judicial independence is the

> total freedom from the other two arms (Executive and Legislature) of Government. The purpose of this is to ensure the entrenchment of democracy. Independence protects the judicial institution from the executive and from the Legislature…It is well accepted among advocates of judicial independence that the following are the key indicators of an independent judiciary; appointment and removal process of judicial officers, how the judiciary is funded, extent of individual and institutional freedom from unwarranted interference with the judicial process by the Executive and Legislative arms of government.[32]

The independence of the Nigerian judiciary will sustain the rule of law and democracy. If the rule of law is assured, injustice and abuse of human rights will be abridged. Justice will be

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[32] P.F.U. Nwankwo, "The Efficacy of the Doctrine of Checks and Balances in Contemporary Nigeria," *International Journal of Innovative Legal and Political Studies* 9, no. 3 (July–September 2021): 73-83.

delivered in timely manner without interference. If the Nigerian Judiciary becomes independent, this will restore the confidence of the people in the judiciary as a place to seek justice at all times. Justice, as a virtue is a great assess to progress, and as such, Nigerians will be sure that erring political leaders will be persuaded to give back to the nation whatever they acquired illegally while in power. Moreover, if some of these corrupt political leaders are punished appropriately by the judiciary for their egregious and deplorable deeds, this may serve as deterrent to others. By this, democracy, stability, and good governance will be sustained and poverty alleviated. By and large, maintaining the independence of the judiciary should be a collaborative effort between the three organs of government. However, members of the Executive and legislature are by their very nature politicians and would not waste time to muzzle the judiciary where it tends to be against laws and policies made by them.

Fundamentally, if there are proper checks and balances in Nigeria, and the legislative arm is independent, that will serve as a proper check for the executive, and will promote accountability and transparency in governance. P.F.U. Nwankwo notes,

> Legislative oversight encourages checks and balances, enthrones fiscal discipline, good governance and transparency in public offices. Legislative oversight takes place when the national Assembly or a state House of Assembly continually review the effectiveness of the executive arm in carrying out the constitutional mandates through supervision, watchfulness of the executive actions and activities. This legislative process affords the electorates the opportunity to see what public offices holders are actually doing, whether they are really serving collective interest or not.[33]

The independence of legislative arm is very important in Nigeria it will assist to restrain corruption, bribery, fraud, bogus and padded budget by the executive. The separation and autonomy of these three arms of government is what Nigeria needs urgently for economic,

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[33] Nwankwo, "Efficacy of Checks and Balances," 73-83.

political, social and even religious progress. Additionally, it will curtail undue incursion into the budget and will inhibit and forestall ethnic and tribal conflicts. It improves human rights and dignity. Checks and balances are essential for the security of liberty under the constitution. It is balancing each of these powers against the other two, that the efforts in human nature towards tyranny can alone be checked and restrained. Checks and balances as presented are key factors in electing good leaders. When the country has upright and worthy leadership, good governance follows poverty and hunger will be suppressed.

6.3.3 Godfatherism in Nigeria

The crisis arising from godfatherism, has become one of the greatest challenges currently facing the Nigerian political system. This problem makes it imperative that the holder of the political position becomes a mere stooge to his godfather because 'he who pays the piper dictates the tune'. Godfatherism paralyzes the progress of the nation. At any time the godson refuses to meet or abide by the godfather's demand or wishes, he is impeached or ignominiously removed from political office. The overpowering of godfathers in Nigeria politics will be a great feat to be accomplished and will be favorable to the nation in the fight against poverty. This is what will be established in this subdivision.

The saga of the godfathers protégé conflict in Nigeria portends great danger to our democratic system and our existence as a nation. Pat. Osa. Oviasuyi reiterates, "There has been a lot of crises in Nigerian politics and Administration—a crisis of confidence in our elected officials, a loss of faith in our democratic government and an increasing frustration at government, and more also, an increasing frustration at the irrelevance of individual's vote in our

political process. All these crises are crises caused by the unholy alliance of godfatherism."[34] The consequence of this unhealthy relationship between the godfathers and their godsons is that the huge sum of money expended by Nigerian godfathers from sponsoring and bankrolling the elections of their godson have absolutely monetized elections in Nigeria which automatically disqualifies men of honor, character and integrity from holding elected public position. This situation has given rise to corruption, ineptitude, poverty, hunger, thuggery, political instability, rigging of election, inflation and non-completion of contracts and lack of infrastructure.

Godfathers are, according to Lambert Edigin Uyi, "powerful individuals who determine who, what, when and how things operate and are usually in the corridors of power. Many godfathers in present-day Nigeria operate like the mafia by displaying similar violent scheming and aggressive politicking coupled with manipulating devices of having their way by any means."[35] Edigin notes that Danoye understands a godfather to be "a human being who plays god to his people. He provides their basic needs, fends for them, protects them and assists them to secure and achieve their objectives. He further states 'his support could be seen as investment, which he believes must yield some profits in the future.'"[36] Following, Oviasuyi describes a godfather as "that man who has enormous resources at his disposal with little or no credibility, he wants the rostrum of social leadership, wielding the weapon of wealth with his awesome financial influence, and he assumes some vapor-coated charisma."[37] In the words of O. Akinola Adeoye,

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[34] Pat. Osa. Oviasuyi, "Impact of Godfatherism on Nigerian Politics and Administration: Anambra and Oyo States Experiences," abstract, *Educational Research Quarterly* 33, no. 2 (December 2009): 30.

[35] Lambert. U. Edigin, "Political Conflicts and Godfatherism in Nigeria: A Focus on the Fourth Republic," *African Research Review* 4, no. 4 (October 2010): 177, DOI: 10.4314/afrrev.v4i4.69220.

[36] Edigin, "Political Conflicts and Godfatherism,"176, quoting Danoye (2004): 44.

[37] Oviasuyi, "Impact of Godfatherism," 34.

> A godfather is a kingmaker, boss, mentor, and principal, while a godson is the beneficiary and recipient of the legacy of a godfather. A godfather is someone who has built unimaginable respect and followers (voters) in the community, and possessed . . . general acceptance from an electorate that could secure victory for candidates of his choice. The politics of godfathers involve the 'anointing' of a godson who is expected to win an election by using the influence, wealth, political structure and political experience of godfather.[38]

Given the above descriptions, it is glaring that godfather's role is sponsoring and bankrolling of bills. This is what gives them the power over their godsons and the penchant to wrench their powers at all cost when their will is disobeyed or not followed.

Examples abound of godfather and godson syndrome. The example of Lamidi Adedibu (godfather) and Rashid Ladoja (godson) of Oyo state will buttress how it works. "Lamidi Adedibu, assumed the statue of a godfather during the tenure of Rashid Ladoja. Adedibu, and Ladoja battled for the soul of Oyo state. This affected governance in the state and it re-enacted political violence for which the state was famous for. At the instance of Lamidi, Rashid Ladoja won the gubernatorial election defeating the incumbent governor Alhaji Lam Adesina. The decision of Adedibu to nominate 13 individuals for commissioners and also special advisers; whereas the governor Ladoja planned to have 14 commissioners, signaled the beginning of the end of the pact between Adedibu and Ladoja. The animosity between them was put into display during the electioneering campaign for the March 2004 local government elections. Ladoja was left to his devices until he was consumed through impeachment.

Another example of the godfather and godson conflict was the acrimony that existed between Dr. Olusola Saraki (godfather) and Alhaji Muhammed Lawal (godson), the governor of

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[38] O. Akinola Adeoye, "Godfatherism and the Future of Nigerian Democracy," *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations* 3, no. 6 (June 2009): 269, https://doi.org/10.5897/AJPSIR.9000058.

Kwara State between May 1999 and September, 2003. Dr. Saraki was purported to have endorsed other contenders as governor of the state and also bankrolled his campaign expenses. But Lawal refused to reciprocate this gesture of Saraki when he did not give adequate government patronage and by acting in ways contrary to what was expected as a loyal 'godson' Saraki who appears to have a firm control of Kwara state politics swore that a second term for Lawal would no longer be a matter of course. "I am keeping the second term with me, Lawal's conduct will determine whether he will get it or not" When Saraki could no longer trust Lawal with the state governorship, he threw his son into the fray in the ticket for the governorship election in 2003. This resulted into destruction, violence, killing, death, maiming and displacement."[39] Other instances of godfather and godson syndrome include; Anambra State, Chris Uba (godfather) and Chris Ngige (protégé), Enugu state Jim Nwobodo (godfather) and Chimaraoke Nnamani (godson), Edo State, Tony Anineh (godfather) and Lucky Igbinedon (godson).

Without doubt godfatherism related crisis has assumed a preposterous position from the enthronement of civil rule in Nigeria. It has caused democracy in Nigeria to assume a pre-bendalism form. It has stimulated bad governance, lack of patriotism, and it hinders development. Edigin alludes,

> Godfathers who take charge of the affairs of political parties eventually constitute the monopolists that determine the outcome of governance. Thus they accomplish that goal by taking (financial) control of the state through their godsons. In all this corruptive tendencies accentuated by patronage politics (Godfatherism) has weakened political institutions and have served as impediments to social and economic growth in Nigeria.[40]

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[39] Edigin, "Political Conflicts and Godfatherism," 174-186.
[40] Edigin, "Political Conflicts and Godfatherism," 174-186.

Evidently, the basic objective of the godfather is the development of self and not the electorate, community or nation. Godfather maintains a parasitic and selfish relationship with the godson and community, not only is the interest of the godson and community abandoned in fulfillment of those of the godfather but the godson and community are coerced to work and make sacrifices towards the realization of the supreme interest of the godfather.

For Nigeria to progress economically, socially and politically it becomes necessary to ameliorate this practice of godfatherism from its political system. If godfatherism is rejected, there will be political stability, and economic progress. Looting and siphoning of resources will be reduced. Poverty, hunger and unemployment will be minimized. There will be rapid development of infrastructure, good roads, well equipped schools and hospitals will be in existence. Brain drainage will stop, people will be paid adequately for the work they do. There will be safe environment for workers. Contracts will be awarded and completed in good time.

On the same token, if godfahers are jettisoned, elections in Nigeria will be fair and free. Peoples' vote will count. Rigging will be rescinded. Servant leader will be elected and will focus on the growth and well-being of people and the communities. Servant leadership will share power, put the needs of others first and helps people develop and perform highly as possible. Servant leader will know that he or she is a servant first and this will begin with the natural feeling that one wants to serve. Servant leader knows that there is distinction between one who is a leader first, and a servant leader. A leader has unusual power to acquire material possessions, whereas a servant leader wants to serve and give to the nation the best. Servant leader will prioritize serving the greater good, and will not have self-interest as objective. Servant leadership, will inculcate bottom-up empowerment, and lead by example. Empowerment,

listening, and sharing of power to those who are capable and efficient will be utmost in the heart of a servant leader. According to Will Kenton on Investopedia,

- Servant leadership seeks to move management and personnel interaction away from controlling activities and toward a synergistic relationship.
- The authority figure in servant leadership environments attempts to promote innovation, empower employees, and assure the well-being of those around them.
- Servant leadership also aims to develop leadership qualities in others.
- This leadership style requires an individual to demonstrate characteristics such as empathy, listening, stewardship, and commitment to the personal growth of others.[41]

Servant leadership will ensure the welfare of Nigeria and Nigerians by creating employment, abundant food, economic and political stability, justice, honesty, improvement of infrastructure that will in no small measure contribute to alleviate poverty, subdue corruption fraud, and embezzlement.

The necessity of abrogating godfather in Nigeria politics has been stated explicitly. Godfatherism as maintained does not promote progress, therefore eradicating it will foster harmony, political peace, development, serenity, qualitative and excellent leadership.

6.3.4 Recycling of Political Office Holders

The Recycling of political office holders is one grave factor responsible for poverty in Nigeria. A discontinuity of this peculiar practice will motivate good governance and proper economic management. Why the recycling of political holders has a bad influence in Nigeria, and the need for its mitigation to reduce poverty in Nigeria will be demonstrated. Nigeria is a country where political gladiators are the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. Political stage is

[41] Will Kenton, "Servant Leadership: Characteristics, Pros and Cons, Example," Investopedia, last updated February 27, 2024, https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/servant-leadership.asp.

meant for them permanently. This is why Nigeria seems to be stagnant and makes no improvement. The country can never be better than those directing its affairs. The affairs of the country have remained in the hands of the same group of people. These set of people have continued to be recycled and re-used in the nation's politics. Adeleke Adegbami comments,

> Due to their insatiable appetite for power and unrelenting political ambition, Nigeria's politicians deploy all arsenals within their influence to stay in power perpetually. It is not surprising, therefore, that the political setting of Nigeria is filled with the same set of people who have continued to dominate and subjugate its governance and administrative activities…A conscientious look at the political landscape of Nigeria shows that the same crop of politicians responsible for its current precarious economic situation and the suffering of the masses are still in charge of the governance and administrative affairs of the country. The sets of politicians have refused to leave the political scenes; they have continued to oscillate among the dominant political parties, which serve as stepping stones to gain access to public office, from where they continued with their veritable political business."[42]

It is irritating that these politicians either recycle themselves, groom their children, wives or cronies to take over from them when they retire. Some of them even give their children political appointments when they are into government so that their off springs can learn their political tactics from them. For instance,

> Audu Ogbe in 1979 was the deputy speaker in the Benue State House of Assembly he was appointed in 1982 as the Federal Minister of Communications and later Minister of Steel Development. His tenure of office ended with military coup d'etat that brought Major General Buhari to power. Ogbe later became the minister of Agriculture between 2015 and 2019. There was also a preponderant number of retired military officers who have directly or indirectly plotted a coup at one time to truncate Nigeria's constitutional government. For instance, Major-General Buhari served as Nigeria's military head of state between December 31, 1983, and August 27, 1985, after taking power in a military coup d'etat. In the Fourth Republic, he was elected as president and served two terms in office from 2015 to 2019."[43]

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[42] Adeleke Adegbami, "Governance, Recycled Politicians and Recycling politics in Nigeria" Pan African Journal of Governance and Development, 4, no.2 (2013): 149-171.
[43] Adegbami, "Governance, Recycled Politicians and Recycling Politics in Nigeria" 149-171.

These examples are replicated across the federation without exception to any political party. The consequence of politicians recycling themselves or their cronies is that they will be collecting their pensions as they collect their full salaries. For instance, some of the ex-governors are currently senators of the Federal Republic Nigeria, they receive pension as ex-governors and their salaries as senators. According to Temidayo Akinboyo,

> The National Assembly now seems to be a retirement home for outgoing and former governors. In the current National Assembly, whose life will expire June 11, 2023, there are 14 former governors serving as senators representing districts from the north and south of the country. While some of the serving senators who are ex-governors lost out in the recently concluded primary elections of their political parties, some who are about to finish their tenure as the chief executive officers of their respective states have won tickets to participate in the 2023 senatorial elections.[44]

By implication, former governors in Nigeria have now made it a tradition to retire to the senate to remain relevant within the loop of power. This explains why they do everything possible to win ticket to the senate. They also want to retire to the senator so that they will not be probed by the law for non-performance, corruption, fraud and bribery. The question is how long shall this continue before Nigeria becomes bankrupt with excessive, unreasonable and unjustifiable wages earn by our politicians?

Realistically, if this culture of recycling politicians and political monarchy is minimized in Nigeria, poverty and corruption will be alleviated. Cultism, political violence, thuggery, ethnic militant groups, assassination of integrity will be ameliorated. When this is done, Nigeria will have free and fair election. Ideally, integrity, discipline, economic management and the servant leader as mentioned early will come onboard. The servant leader will stimulate positive change

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[44] Temidayo Akinboyo, "Nigeria: 28 Past, Present Governors Who May Be Senators in 2023," *Premium Times*, June 25, 2022, https://allafrica.com/stories/202206250204.html.

in the country this is because servant leadership is based on the devolution of power to followers under this condition. Implying that servant leaders see themselves as steward serving their followers in a manner that allows them to contribute their very best to fulfilling organizational (or national) objectives. The servant leadership will eradicate the problem of leadership, which is the greatest challenge facing Nigeria. It will enhance development with the human and material resources accessible to the nation. Once good governance is in place some of the anomalies besieging Nigeria like lack of accountability, transparency, expensive democracy and economic mismanagement will be reduced, with that poverty will be minimized.

Furthermore, if this political colonization enforced by recycling of politicians in Nigeria is curtailed, it will encourage more women and youth to participate in politics. We have witnessed politicians recycling to perpetuate themselves in power thereby not giving women and youth the opportunity to participate in active politics. Akinyetun Tope Shola alludes,

> The population of youth (18-35 years) in Nigeria is 52.2 million (i.e. about 28% of total population). … In spite of the prospects that this number holds young people in Nigeria are largely marginalized from governance, leaving them helpless to counter their continued exclusion. This is evidenced by the lower percentage of youth that hold political and leadership positions in the country.[45]

It is quite disheartening that instead of youth participating in politics, they are used by politicians as thugs to cause confusion, rig elections and carry ballot boxes. In some cases the youth are killed or maimed thereby depopulating the work force of the country. With the reduction of the work force poverty is stimulated.

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[45] Akinyetun Tope Shola, "Youth Political Participation, Good Governance and Social Inclusion in Nigeria: Evidence from Nairaland," *Canadian Journal of Family and Youth* 13, no. 2 (2021): 1-13.

Apparently, if the youth are given the chance to participate in active politics, they will challenge the status quo thereby ushering in good governance. Shola cries out,

> Majority of Nigerian youth are unemployed even though a larger percentage of them have either attained or presently undergoing post-secondary education. It is therefore important that attention be paid to youth involvement in politics, because … their involvement will promote good governance, especially in the area of transparency, accountability, and development. In a like manner, their involvement in politics will effectively address inequity and exclusion to create an inclusive society.[46]

There are many benefits to be gained in Nigeria if the youth and women engage in politics. It will restrain the number of youth involved in cultism, criminal acts, and immoral behavior. Youth and women are dynamic source of innovation; they can catalyze important changes in political systems, power sharing dynamics, economic opportunities, and resilient democracy. They would provide foundation for rebuilding lives and communities, contributing to more just and peaceful society.

This research has pinpointed that the bane of the country is corruption. Corruption is one of the primary reasons hindering progress in the country. It is because of this that the theoretical frame work suggests that willful or conscious resistance will assist to minimize corruption. Willful or conscious resistance whose core are the golden rule and compassion will encourage Nigerians and every other individual to radically say no to all the known structures that promote and endorse corruption, and colonialism. The soul of willful or conscious resistance is that it ushers in new behavior, positive attitude, and justice. Because willful or conscious resistance is rooted in the golden rule and compassion, the resultant effects are transparency, accountability, good governance, moral leadership and responsibility. With positive attitude and changes,

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[46] Shola, "Youth Political Participation," 1-13.

poverty will be minimized, there will be employment, and investors will be stimulated to invest, there will be security, and infrastructure will be improved.

6.3.5 Conclusion

The socio-economic and political solutions are important for Nigeria and Nigerians to move forward and effectively to alleviate poverty. The implementation of the above solutions will expeditiously improve infrastructure in Nigeria, create employment and entice investors among other things. Any country, where people are employed and receive their due wage regularly poverty is usually minimized and Nigeria is no exception. As poverty is a challenge to many countries especially in Sub Saharan Africa, if they would apply some of these solutions how it suits them poverty will drastically be reduced in the whole of Africa.

Chapter Seven: Evaluation and Conclusion

This research examined what poverty is, the nature, types, causes and solutions to poverty. It focused fundamentally on Nigeria, and why it has remained poor and under developed in spite of her abundant natural and human resources. In doing this, it examined the different concepts of poverty, emphasizing the similarities and dissimilarities. It displayed the features of the poor and non-poor persons. It explored, colonialism and the different military juntas in Nigeria and how they contributed immeasurably to poverty in Nigeria. It further established the political, economic, cultural, religious and environmental causes of poverty. Accordingly, political factors mentioned are neo-colonialism, foreign aids, political corruption, poor leadership, political instability and bad governance. Economic factors include globalization and mono-economy. Cultural factors explored are; inter-tribal, intra-tribal conflicts, marginalization of women, concentration on politics rather than on good governance, and prebendalism. Religious reasons comprise incessant inter-religious and intra religious conflicts. Environmental feature encompasses; climate change, herdsmen, flood and drought. The study indicated that corruption is the most prominent factor causing poverty in Nigeria because it is practiced by the executive, legislative, judiciary and functional politicians in Nigeria. Government institutions, private sectors, and even individuals are not spared of this endemic disease called corruption. It is so exacerbated, and wide spread that to minimize it, is a great challenge to the country.

The study went further, to demonstrate the socio-economic and societal indicators of poverty. According to the research, the socio-economic indicators are; unemployment, lack of infrastructure, education, poor remuneration and migration. Societal indicators are moral

decadence, crime, thuggery, violence, kidnapping, nepotism, human trafficking and ritual practices.

The thesis investigated the role of the Church in the fight against corruption and poverty. Essentially, it explained what the church can do to reduce corruption and alleviate poverty. It illuminates the notion of the Bible and the poor, and the Church and the poor. It stressed the principle of the fundamental option for the poor, prophetic teaching of the church on prosperity gospel, moral values and the church's participation in politics as panacea to the challenge posed by poverty. This chapter includes the author's personal theology which is theology of empowerment. This theology of empowerment explains the effects of poverty and how the poor should be enabled and supported to fight the structural systems that emboldens poverty. It is applied to the political, economic, and social life of the poor in Nigeria, and how they would use it to oppose injustice, political corruption, poor leadership, bad governance, oppression and marginalization.

Irrespective of the prevalent nature of poverty, and the causes, this research proposes some socio-economic, and political solutions that when implemented will alleviate poverty in Nigeria. Among the socio-economic factors are; improvement of infrastructure, agriculture, reducing the cost of governance, and implementation of right policies. The political solutions include; transparency, checks and balances, minimizing the culture of recycling of political office holders, abrogating godfatherism and colonial mentality, This research argues that willful or conscious resistance is one of the crucial solutions to poverty because its core are compassion, justice, Ubuntu spirit, the golden rule, and preferential option for the poor. The study concludes that if these solutions are conscientiously and diligently applied poverty will be ameliorated. This is because in order to alleviate poverty, the existence of poverty must be realized through the

definition, factors and indicators. The type of poverty being suffered must be ascertained, moreover, causes and determinants of poverty should be expounded as these are the keys to alleviation of poverty, thoroughly, this research considered all the issues mentioned.

Postscript

My accomplishment in this study and dissertation was made possible through God's grace. It is a dream come true, and I owe it all to the Blessed Trinity, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and my patron saint. I have always wanted to further my studies, but I did not know how. I am a cradle catholic. I grew up in a poor community and wished the government and Church could help us live empowered lives.

When I was ordained a Catholic priest, I encountered many people struggling with poverty, yet they anchored themselves on God. I met people who went to sleep without food, those who trekked about ten miles or more to fetch water, and those who scavenged to find something to eat. I met students who went to school barefooted and children who roamed the streets because their parents did not have the resources to send them to school. Painfully, I experienced both infant and maternal mortality. I saw people dying prematurely because they had no money to go to the hospital or transport themselves to the hospital. The only means of transport available was the bicycle, which only a few people owned. The exciting aspect was that those people had strong faith in God. They encouraged and inspired me to start contemplating addressing their pain and suffering. The experiences I had growing up and as a pastor gingered me to do something about the needs of those living bent, who are marginalized, oppressed, who suffer injustice, and are powerless and voiceless. I started farming, concentrating on cassava and yam. I did this to empower people, use farming to share, spread the good news, and train people to be self-sufficient.

I am thrilled that my hope to do studies centering on poverty and the role of government and the Church in alleviating it is a reality. I am happy that the work has been written and will be

available for reference to those interested in empowering the lives of the poor in society. I am optimistic that Nigerian leaders and other African leaders, functional politicians, and Christian leaders from all circles will be delighted to use this research to implement such programs in schools and churches. I hope many lives will be changed and poverty will be minimized.

When people are cared for physically and spiritually, encouraged and empowered to live the gospel standard taught by Jesus Christ, they contribute to bringing the kingdom of God. I hope for a dynamic Church that upholds servant leadership. A Church that will radiate compassion, kindness, and love. A church that empowers and stresses the essence of justice and promotes human rights. (Ephesians 4:32, 1 Peter 3:8, 1 John 3:17).

I am interested in a church that loves one another as God loves us. A Church faithful to the gospel, immersed in social issues of the day to transform individuals and society. A Church that stands in solidarity with the poor, sees Christ in the face of the poor, and practices God's love with those around. (Matthew 5:13-16, Matthew 25:32, 25:40, 25:45, Luke 14:12-14, Luke 14:16-24, Luke 6:21-22) The earlier Church is a good example of the Church I envisage. A community of sharing, fellowship, prayer, and those with enough food shared with others according to each person's need. (Acts 4:33-35; 2:45)

On the same token, I am rooting for a proactive government. A government that listens, cares, is sensitive, and implements policies to lessen poverty: a government that respects justice, the rule of law, and human dignity. I hope for a government that does not segregate or oppress, where prebendalism, tribalism, injustice, fraud, embezzlement, nepotism, godfatherism, and bribery are not practiced, but where accountability, transparency, hard work, harmony, and security are for all and highly esteemed. This will bring encouragement, hope, and assistance to

the poor. The nation will improve economically, socially, politically, and religiously, and poverty will be reduced.

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